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December 1, 2000 All Wheat Grain Stocks Down 17 Percent

For immediate release: January 11, 2001
For more information please contact: Darin Jantzi or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

All wheat stocks in Montana on December 1, 2000 totaled 133.9 million bushels, down 17 percent from December 1, 1999. Stocks stored on the farm accounted for 111.0 million bushels of the total with the remaining 22.9 million bushels stored off farm. All spring wheat stocks, at 91.6 million bushels, were down 25 percent from last year and accounted for 68 percent of the total wheat stocks. Winter wheat stocks were estimated at 42.3 million bushels, up from 38.9 million bushels last year. Durum wheat stocks were estimated at 11.3 million bushels, down 10 percent from last year. All wheat disappearance for the September - November quarter was 35.5 million bushels, compared with 29.0 million for the same quarter last year. Barley stocks in all positions on December 1, 2000 totaled 25.6 million bushels, down 36 percent from a year ago. Oats stocks in all positions were estimated at 2.52 million bushels, down 13 percent from last year.

Nationally, all wheat stored in all positions on December 1, 2000 totaled 1.80 billion bushels, down 4 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 623 million bushels, down 4 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 1.18 billion bushels, are down 5 percent from a year ago. The indicated September - November 2000 quarter disappearance is 551 million bushels, down 2 percent from the same period in 1999. Durum wheat stocks in all positions on December 1, 2000 totaled 104 million bushels, down 5 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 72.0 million bushels, are down 3 percent from 1999. Off-farm stocks totaled 32.3 million bushels, down 9 percent from a year ago. The indicated September - November 2000 quarter disappearance of 18.9 million bushels is down 29 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Barley stocks in all positions on December 1, 2000 are estimated at 229 million bushels, less than 1 percent above last year. On-farm stocks are 112 million bushels, 3 percent above a year ago. Off-farm stocks are 117 million bushels, 2 percent below 1999. Indicated disappearance during the September - November 2000 quarter totaled 65 million bushels, down 3 percent from the same period a year earlier. Oats stored in all positions on December 1, 2000 totaled 144 million bushels, 8 percent above the December 1, 1999 estimate. Of the total stocks on hand, 86.9 million bushels were stored in on-farm facilities, 9 percent above the same quarter last year. Stocks held in off-farm storage facilities totaled 57.4 million bushels, 6 percent more than a year earlier. Indicated disappearance from all positions during the September - November 2000 quarter totaled 6.1 million bushels compared to 14.8 million bushels during the same period a year ago.

Corn stocks in all positions on December 1, 2000 totaled 8.52 billion bushels, up 6 percent from December 1, 1999 and the highest level since 1987. Of the total stocks, 5.55 billion bushels were stored on farms, up 7 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 2.97 billion bushels, were up 4 percent from the previous year. The September - November 2000 indicated disappearance based on September 1, 2000 stocks, 2000 production, and December 1 stocks is 3.17 billion bushels, compared with 3.18 billion bushels during the same period last year.

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Winter Wheat Seeding for 2001 Crop Down 20 Percent

For immediate release: January 11, 2001
For more information please contact: Darin Jantzi or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

In the fall of 2000 Montana producers seeded 1.2 million acres of winter wheat, 300,000 acres less than the acreage seeded the previous year. During the last 10 years producers planted an average of 1.9 million acres, so the seeded acres for the 2001 crop are 37 percent below this average.

The major winter wheat production areas in Montana are the North Central, Central, South Central, and Southeast districts. Precipitation amounts since October 1 in these four districts has been mixed. The North Central and South Central districts have received mostly below normal precipitation, while the Central and Southeast have received mostly above normal amounts. However, moisture across the entire state before October 1 has been sparse for the last 1 ½ years. There has been good snowfall amounts so far this winter to protect the crop from weather's harsh elements. As of January 2, the winter wheat condition was rated at 0 percent very poor, 11 percent poor, 38 percent fair, 51 percent good, and 0 percent excellent.

Nationally, winter wheat seeded area for 2001 is expected to total 41.3 million acres, down 5 percent from 2000. This is the smallest area since 1971. Class acreage breakdowns are estimated to be: Hard Red Winter, 28.9 million; Soft Red Winter, 8.9 million; and White Winter, 3.5 million.

Hard Red Winter (HRW) wheat seeded area is about 28.9 million acres, down 5 percent from 2000. Oklahoma and Texas led the decline, down 700,000 and 400,000 acres, respectively. Colorado and Montana also showed large decreases. Dry conditions have been the leading cause of the lower acreage, leading to delayed seeding progress and even slower emergence. In Texas and Oklahoma, the dry conditions were followed by excessive rainfall which further hindered progress. The Colorado crop is short and poorly rooted leaving it vulnerable to blow out and shallow snow cover. The summer drought in Montana continued into the fall causing many farmers to reduce their planted acreage.

Durum wheat seedings in Arizona and California for 2001 harvest are placed at 160,000 acres. This total is down 14 percent from their final 2000 planting. Seeding in California's San Joaquin Valley progressed rapidly during October and November. Below normal precipitation has forced growers to irrigate earlier than usual. Seeding began in the Imperial Valley in late November and will continue into March as the winter vegetable harvest finishes.

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2000 Annual Crops Summary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 11, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: John Gibbons, Darin Jantzi, or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

LATE SEASON CROPS

Montana producers harvested 18,000 acres of **corn for grain** in 2000, unchanged from last year's estimate. The average yield was 140.0 bushels per acre, up 30 bushels from last year. Production rose 27 percent from 1999 to 2.52 million bushels. **Corn for silage** acreage was estimated at 40,000 acres, down 5,000 acres from 1999. Yields averaged 21 tons per acre, up one ton from a year ago.

Sugar beet producers in Montana planted 60,700 acres and harvested an estimated 53,900 acres in 2000, down 7,800 acres from a year ago. Heavy frosts and freeze damage can be blamed for the high levels of crop abandonment in the state. Yields increased 0.7 tons from last year to average 24.5 tons per acre. Total production was estimated at 1.32 million tons, down 10 percent from the previous year.

Fall potato production in Montana totaled 3.50 million cwt, up 5.4 percent from last year. Producers harvested 11,300 acres compared with 10,900 in 1999. Yields increased 5 cwt per acre from a year ago to 310 cwt.

All hay harvested in Montana was down 600,000 acres from last year, to 2.0 million acres. All hay production was 3.56 million tons, down 29.6 percent or 1,495,000 tons from a year ago. This is the lowest production in Montana since 1988. **Alfalfa hay** harvested acreage was 1.2 million acres, down 450,000 acres from last season. The average yield was 2.1 tons per acre, which is 0.1 ton less than last year. **Other hay** harvested acreage was 800,000, down 150,000 acres from 1999. The average yield was 1.3 tons per acre compared with 1.5 tons per acre last year.

Montana **hay stocks** were estimated at 3.17 million tons on December 1, down 29 percent from last year. This represents the lowest hay stock numbers since 1988. Montana hay growers **seeded** an estimated 130,000 acres of **alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures** during 2000, 70,000 acres less than last year. New seedings include those mixed with a nurse crop, other forage, or direct seedings.

U.S. corn grain production is estimated at 9.97 billion bushels, up 6 percent from 1999, and is the second largest crop behind 1994's record production of 10.1 billion bushels. Production is down 1 percent from the November 1 forecast due to lower than expected yields realized in the heart of the Corn Belt as well as increased abandonment in the central Plains and Southeast. The U.S. grain yield of 137.1 bushels per acre is up 3.3 bushels from 1999 and is the second largest yield on record.

U.S. **sugar beet** production is estimated at 32.5 million tons from 1.38 million acres. Harvested acres are 10 percent below last year, mainly due to PIK reductions. The production estimate is 3 percent below last year, and 1 percent below the November forecast. The yield estimate, at 23.6 tons per acre, is unchanged from the November forecast, but 1.7 tons above 1999.

Fall potato production for 2000 in the U.S. is a record high 471 million cwt, up 9 percent from comparable estimates last year, and 4 percent above the previous record in 1996. Area harvested, at 1.20 million acres, is up a comparable 2 percent from last year. The average yield is a record high 393 cwt per acre, a jump of 24 cwt from the previous record high last year and 36 cwt above two years ago for comparable States. Ten Western States produced 333 million cwt of potatoes in 2000, up 12 percent from the last year and 13 percent above two years ago.

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Barley production in the U.S. for 2000 was estimated at 320 million bushels, up 3 percent from the last forecast and up 14 percent from last year's estimate. Average yield per acre, at 61.4 bushels, is up 2.2 bushels from 1999. The area harvested for grain is estimated at 5.21 million acres, 10 percent above a year ago.

U.S. oat production for the 2000 crop year is estimated at 149.2 million bushels, 2 percent above the 1999 production. The estimated yield, at 64.2 bushels per acre, is 8 percent higher than last year. Area harvested for grain in 2000 is 2.32 million acres, 5 percent below 1999. This continues the steady downward trend and breaks last year's record as the smallest acreage harvested for grain on record.

PULSE CROPS

Montana's **dry bean** growers produced an estimated 486,000 cwt in 2000, up 45,000 cwt from 1999. Growers harvested 34,800 acres with a yield of 14.0 cwt per acre compared with last year's 25,500 acres harvested with a yield of 17.30 cwt per acre.

Pinto bean production for Montana in 2000 is estimated to be 331,000 cwt, which is 11.8 percent above last year's estimate. Harvested acreage, at 13,800, is 4.5 percent higher than the previous year. The yield is estimated at 2,400 pounds per acre, 160 pounds more than last year.

Montana's second production estimate for **garbanzo beans** was 150,000 cwt for 2000, which is 12.8 percent higher than last year. Harvested area is estimated at 20,500 acres, up 8,700 from last year. The yield is estimated at 730 pounds per acre, down from last year's estimate of 1,130 pounds per acre.

Dry peas production for 2000 in Montana is estimated at 233,000 cwt. Planted and harvested acreage is estimated at 28,000 and 24,000 acres, respectively. Average yield is set at 9.7 cwt per acre.

Montana's 2000 production of **lentils** is estimated at 210,000 cwt. Planted area is estimated at 22,000 acres and harvested acres are set at 21,000 acres. The average yield is estimated to be 10.0 cwt per acre.

U.S. dry edible bean production is estimated at 26.4 million cwt for 2000, virtually unchanged from the December 1 forecast but down 21 percent from 1999 for comparable States. Harvested area is estimated at 1.61 million acres, down slightly from the December 1 forecast and 15 percent below last year for comparable States. Comparable States can be calculated by subtracting South Dakota from all 2000 estimates and subtracting New Mexico from all 1998 and 1999 estimates. Production is down in 2000 for all estimating States except Montana, Oregon, and Wisconsin. Production for all classes except for garbanzo, great northern, and large lima is below 1999. Pinto and navy, the two largest varieties, decreased 2 percent and 35 percent, respectively from 1999.

Production of **dry edible peas** in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington is estimated at 3.50 million cwt for 2000, 1 percent above the November 1 forecast but down 28 percent from 1999. This is the lowest production since 1996 when 2.67 million cwt was produced. Area harvested, at 179,000 acres, is 2 percent above the previous forecast but 30 percent below 1999. Average yields, at 1,955 pounds per acre, decreased 8 pounds from the November 1 forecast but increased 73 pounds from 1999.

Lentils production in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and Washington is estimated at 3.03 million cwt for 2000, up 2 percent from the November 1 forecast and 27 percent above 1999. Planted acres, at 217,000, are unchanged from the forecast but 19 percent above 1999. Harvested acres, at 214,000, are 2 percent above the November 1 forecast and 23 percent higher than last year. Average yield per acre, at 1,415 pounds, is 10 pounds below November's forecast but 47 pounds above last year.

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Montana and U.S. January 1, 2001 Cattle and Calf Inventory Down

For immediate release: January 26, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard II or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's cattle and calf inventory was down 2 percent from a year ago to 2.55 million head on January 1, 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Drought, poor pasture and range conditions, tight feed supplies, and higher cattle prices all contributed to this year's lower inventory. Inventories of beef cows that have calved, other heifers, steers, and calves weighing less than 500 lbs were all significantly impacted by these factors.

The inventory of beef cows that had calved on January 1, 2001 were down 3 percent from year ago to 1.531 million head. The number of milk cows in the state increased 1,000 head from a year ago to 19,000 head, reversing a 20 year decline in milk cow inventories. There were 1.62 million calves born during 2000, up 3 percent from the 1999 calf crop of 1.57 million. Favorable calving conditions, higher beginning-year cow inventories, and more heifer replacements that calved during 2000 contributed to the increase in the calf crop.

Beef heifer replacements, weighing 500 pounds or more, were up 7 percent from the previous year to 405,000 head. Milk heifer replacements were the same as the previous year at 10,000 head. The number of other heifers weighing 500 lbs or more, decreased 3 percent from last year to 175,000 head.

The inventory of steers weighing 500 lbs or more, dropped 9 percent from the previous year to 210,000 head. Calves weighing less than 500 lbs, at 90,000 head, were down 5 percent from last year's record low calf inventory of 95,000 head. Higher prices and drought severely impacted steer and calf inventories. Inventory of bulls weighing 500 pounds or more set a new record high at 110,000 head, up 5 percent from a year ago. The number of cattle and calves on full feed that will be sent directly to slaughter was down 14 percent from a year ago to 60,000 head. More custom feeding and backgrounding resulted in fewer cattle and calves on full feed.

There were 14,400 operations in Montana during 2000 with one or more head, up 2 percent from 1999. The number of beef cow operations with one or more beef cows also increased 2 percent to 12,800, while the number of operations with one or more milk cows declined to 600.

In the **United States**, all cattle and calves on January 1, 2001, totaled 97.3 million head, 1 percent below the 98.2 million on January 1, 2000 and 2 percent below the 99.1 million two years ago. All cows and heifers that have calved, at 42.6 million, were slightly below the 42.8 million on January 1, 2000 and 1 percent below the 42.9 million two years ago. Beef cows, at 33.4 million, were down 1 percent from both January 1, 2000 and January 1, 1999. Milk cows, at 9.20 million, were up slightly from January 1, 2000 and 1 percent above two years ago.

Other class estimates on January 1, 2001 and the change from January 1, 2000, are as follows:

- All heifers 500 pounds and over, 19.8 million, up 1 percent.
- Beef replacement heifers, 5.59 million, up 2 percent.
- Milk replacement heifers, 4.05 million, up 1 percent.
- Other heifers, 10.1 million, down slightly.
- Steers weighing 500 pounds and over, 16.4 million, down 1 percent.
- Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.27 million, down 1 percent.
- Calves under 500 pounds, 16.2 million, down 4 percent.
- Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter in all feedlots, 14.2 million, up 1 percent.

Data for beef cow and milk cow replacement heifers expected to calve in the coming year is published in this issue for the first time. These data will be published on an annual basis in the January release. Beef replacement heifers expected to calve during 2001 totaled 3.14 million, which is 57 percent of the January 1, 2001 beef replacement heifers in the inventory. Milk replacement heifers expected to calve during 2001 totaled 2.54 million, which is 63 percent of the milk heifer replacements.

The 2000 United States calf crop was estimated at 38.6 million head, down slightly from both 1999 and 1998. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 28.4 million, down slightly from both 1999 and 1998.

The number of operations in the United States with 1 or more head of cattle totaled 1.08 million during 2000, down 2 percent from 1999 and 4 percent below 1998. Beef cow operations in 2000 were down 2 percent from 1999 and 3 percent below 1998. Milk cow operations were 5 percent below last year and 10 percent below two years ago.

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January 1, 2001 Sheep Inventory and 2000 Wool Production

For immediate release: January 26, 2001
For more information contact: Carmen Pennington or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's sheep and lamb inventory set a new record low at 360,000 head on January 1, 2001, down 3 percent from last year, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Drought, unstable prices, and predators in 2000 were key factors in the continued decline.

Breeding sheep and lamb numbers decreased 10,000 head from last year to 330,000 head. Ewes one year and older were down 3 percent to 265,000 head. Rams one year and older, at 9,000 head, were unchanged from the previous year. Replacement lambs, at 56,000 head, were down 1,000 head from a year ago. The 2000 lamb crop was 365,000 head, an increase of 7 percent from the 1999 lamb crop.

There were 30,000 market sheep and lambs on hand January 1. Only 2,000 head were market sheep. Of the 28,000 total market lambs, 7 percent weighed less than 65 pounds, 22 percent weighed 65-84 pounds, 57 percent were in the 85-105 pound category, and 14 percent were over 105 pounds. There were 2,000 sheep and lamb operations with 1 or more head in Montana during 2000, 100 more than a year ago.

Montana wool growers produced 3.3 million pounds of wool during 2000, up 4 percent from 1999. The 2000 average price per pound of wool decreased 13 cents to 37 cents per pound, causing the value of all wool produced to decrease 23 percent for a total value of $1.2 million dollars. The total head shorn increased 3 percent from 2000 to 347,000 head. The average fleece weight increased from 9.5 pounds in 1999 to 9.6 pounds in 2000.

In the **United States**, all sheep and lamb inventory on January 1, 2001, totaled 6.92 million head, down 2 percent from 2000 and 4 percent below two years ago. The inventory has trended down since 1942 when it reached a peak of 56.2 million head.

Breeding sheep inventory declined to 4.93 million head on January 1, 2001, down 5 percent from 5.16 million head on January 1, 2000. Ewes one year old and older, at 4.06 million head, were 4 percent below last year. The 2000 lamb crop of 4.62 million head was down 2 percent from 1999 to a new record low. The 2000 lambing rate was 109 per 100 ewes one year old and older on January 1, 2000, compared with 110 in 1999.

Market sheep and lambs on January 1, 2001, totaled 1.99 million head, up 6 percent from January 1, 2000. Market lambs comprised 96 percent of the total. Twenty-four percent were lambs under 65 pounds, 18 percent were 65-84 pounds, 24 percent 85-105 pounds, 30 percent were over 105 pounds, and 4 percent were market sheep. The number of operations with sheep during 2000 totaled 66,000, down 1 percent from 1999 and 4 percent from 1998.

Shorn wool production in the United States during 2000 was 46.4 million pounds, down slightly from 1999. Sheep and lambs shorn totaled 6.14 million head, slightly down from 1999. The average price paid for wool sold in 2000 was $0.33 per pound for a total value of $15.5 million dollars, down 13 percent from $17.9 million dollars in 1999.

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Chicken Inventory and Egg Production Up In Montana and U.S.

For Immediate Release: January 30, 2001
For More Information Please Contact: Cathy Duncan or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

There were 460,000 total chickens on Montana farms and ranches on December 1, 2000, compared with 410,000 on hand last year, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The December 1, 2000 inventory included 320,000 layers 20 weeks old and older, 58,000 pullets between 13 and 20 weeks old, and 81,000 pullets 13 weeks and under. The total value of all chickens on December 1, 2000 was $1.4 million, up 14 percent from the previous December. The average value per bird, at $3.00, was up 10 cents from last year.

Montana chickens produced 84 million eggs during the year ending November 30, 2000, down 11 percent from last year. The state had an average of 291,000 layers in 2000, up slightly from last year's average of 290,000. The average production per layer on hand was 289 eggs, down 11 percent from the previous year.

The U.S. total number of chickens on hand on December 1, 2000 (excluding commercial broilers) was 435 million birds, down slightly from last year. Potential layers (layers 20 weeks old and older, plus pullets 13 weeks and older but less than 20 weeks) on hand December 1, 2000, totaled 371 million, up 1 percent from December 1, 1999. Of the 371 million potential layers, 90 percent were 20 weeks old and older and the remainder were pullets 13 weeks and older but less than 20 weeks. The total value of all chickens on December 1, 2000 was $1.06 billion, down 8 percent from December 1,1999. The average value decreased from $2.65 per bird on December 1, 1999, to $2.43 per bird on December 1, 2000.

U.S. egg production during the year ending November 30, 2000 totaled a record high 84.4 billion eggs, up 2 percent from the previous year's total of 82.7 billion eggs. Table egg production, at 71.4 billion eggs, increased 2 percent from 1999. Hatching egg production, at 13.0 billion eggs, increased slightly. The average number of layers during 2000 was 328 million, up 2 percent from the year earlier. The annual average production per layer on hand in 2000 was 257 eggs, unchanged from the 1999 average.

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Agricultural Prices Received for January

For Immediate Release: January 31, 2001
For More Information Please Contact: Darin Jantzi or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

December full month crop prices were mixed compared with November 2000, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $2.99 per bushel, up 8 cents from November; durum wheat was $3.88 per bushel, down 19 cents; and spring wheat was 3 cents lower at $3.14 per bushel. Feed barley average price was $1.69 and malt barley was $2.73 per bushel, up 13 and 1 cents respectively.

The mid-January price for alfalfa hay was $90.00 per ton, down $2.00 from last month. Other hay, at $82.00 per ton, was down $1.00 from December's mid-month price. The mid-January winter wheat price averaged $3.00 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.15, feed barley was $1.75, and malt barley averaged $2.80.

Livestock prices for the full month of December were also mixed compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices decreased $3.70 to $90.60 per cwt. Cows were down $2.00 to $35.40, and the average price for calves was down $1.00 to $101.00 per cwt. Sheep prices increased $5.50 to $36.50 per cwt, and lamb prices increased $10.30 to $88.40 per cwt. Milk prices were 70 cents below last month at $13.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-January averaged $91.70 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for December and changes from November were as follows: winter wheat was $2.76, up 6 cents; spring wheat was $2.98, up 1 cent; the all barley price was $2.19, up 7 cents; and steer and heifer prices were $76.80, up $3.00.

The U.S. mid-January winter wheat price was $2.82 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.99 per bushel, all wheat was $2.88 per bushel, and all barley was $2.09. Steer and heifer prices were $79.30 per cwt, cow prices were $38.40, all hog prices were $37.10 per cwt, and all egg prices were 67.2 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary All Farms Products Index of Prices Received in January was 96 based on 1990-92=100, down 2 points (2.0 percent) from the December Index. Lower prices for eggs, cotton, hogs, and soybeans were partially offset by higher prices for cattle, tomatoes, milk, and strawberries. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Lower seasonal marketings of cotton, tobacco, grapes, and cottonseed were partially offset by higher marketings of cattle, corn, and soybeans.

Compared with January 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 5 points (5.5 percent) higher. Price increases from January 2000 for cattle, milk, cotton, and strawberries were partially offset by lower prices for oranges, apples, potatoes, and lettuce.

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Montana Privately-Owned Grazing Rates Increase

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 31, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The average grazing fees paid by Montana producers for grazing livestock on privately owned, non-irrigated grazing land were up for all methods in 2000, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The average amount paid for grazing livestock on an AUM (animal unit month) basis was $14.10 per month, up 90 cents from 1999. Cattle producers paid $15.60 per cow-calf pair in 2000, up 60 cents from the previous year. The average per head rate was $14.70 per month in 2000, up 70 cents from last year.

In the 17 States that estimate grazing fees in the United States, the average charge on an AUM basis was $11.50 per month in 2000, up 40 cents from the previous year. Cow-calf rates averaged $13.70 per month, up 90 cents and per head rates averaged $11.90 per month, up 40 cents from 1999.

All grazing fees are for privately, owned non-irrigated grazing land. Rates charged for public land, irrigated land, and harvested cropland were excluded. The average AUM rate also includes reported AUM rates plus reported cow-calf rates that were converted to an AUM basis. The cow-calf rate was converted to AUM basis using the following formula (1 AUM=cow-calf *0.833).

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Alfalfa Seed Production Down 2 Percent From 1999

For immediate release: February 13, 2001
For more information please contact: Darin Jantzi or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Alfalfa seed production for 2000 was estimated at 5.18 million pounds, down from the 5.30 million pounds produced in 1999. Harvested acreage at 19,000 acres was down from 20,000 acres in 1999. The state average yield was estimated at 273 pounds per acre, up from 265 pounds per acre a year ago. Irrigated yields averaged 391 pounds per acre, down from 404 pounds per acre in 1999 and non-irrigated yields averaged 91 pounds per acre, down 4 pounds per acre from last year.

Producers used an average of 1.5 gallons of leaf cutter bees per acre on all acres harvested for alfalfa seed in 2000, compared with 1.1 gallons per acre in 1999. Leaf cutter bees were used on 74% of the reported irrigated acres at the rate of 3.0 gallons per acre and 19% of the reported non-irrigated acres at the rate of 1.3 gallons per acre.

Proprietary varieties made up 88 percent of this year's production, up 3 points from 1999. Common uncertified varieties accounted for 12 percent of the production and common certified varieties represented less than 1 percent.

The average price received for the 2000 crop was $1.19 per pound, down 1 cent from 1999's average price.

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March Crops Survey to Measure Planting Intentions and Stocks Inventories

For immediate release: February 13, 2001
For more information please contact: Cathy Duncan or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

What are farmers' planting intentions for the 2001 crop year? How much grain is still being stored from the 2000 crop season? To gather reliable and accurate information, the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be surveying producers in the March Crops Agricultural Survey. The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service (MASS) will be conducting the survey between February 27th and March 16th. The survey includes questions on planting intentions for small grains and row crops, acres of hay expected to be harvested, and stocks inventories. Approximately 1,900 Montana producers will be contacted during the survey.

The information gathered is widely used. Producers rely on the data to reach valid production, marketing, and investment decisions. Industry analysts, extension agents, and farm organizations use the information in a variety of ways that benefit farmers.

"We safeguard the confidentiality of all survey responses," said Peggy Stringer, Montana State Statistician. "Information from individual operations is combined with other responses to provide the needed data." MASS works with farmers and ranchers to provide meaningful, accurate, and objective statistics that help keep U.S. agriculture informed.

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2000 Crop Values

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 15, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Darin Jantzi or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The value of Montana's 2000 **all wheat** crop fell 3 percent from 1999 to $438.4 million. Total production was down twelve percent, but the season average price increased 32 cents per bushel. The 2000 season average price for all wheat was $3.25 per bushel compared with $2.93 last season.

The estimated value of Montana's **winter wheat** crop increased 38 percent from last year to $135.9 million. The preliminary season average price was up 38 cents to $3.05. **Spring wheat's** value of production was estimated at $251.9 million, down 21 percent from 1999. The season average price increased 28 cents to $3.25, but with 2000 production being the smallest since 1990 the overall crop value was reduced. **Durum wheat's** season average price increased 40 cents from 1999 to $3.85. The total crop value of $50.7 million was up 55 percent from 1999 and is the highest durum wheat value of production on record.

Total value of production for **barley** was estimated at $89.3 million, down 33 percent from the previous year. The 2000 season average price, at $2.35, was up 3 cents from 1999, but significantly lower production in 2000 resulted in the lower production value.

The season average price for **all hay** increased $16.00 from last year to $81.00 per ton. However, significantly lower production reduced the value of production almost 11 percent to $285.2 million. **Alfalfa hay's** 2000 season average price was estimated at $82.00, up $16.00 from last year while **other hay's** season average price increased $19.50 to $75.50.

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Barley, Oats and Wheat County Estimates for 2000 Now Available

For immediate release: February 20, 2001
For more information please contact: Darin Jantzi or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612

County estimates for barley, oats, all wheat, winter wheat, durum wheat and spring wheat are now available. Estimates are made for acres planted, acres harvested for grain, average yield per harvested acre and production. Estimates are made by practices of irrigated crops and non-irrigated crops that were re-cropped or continuously cropped and non-irrigated crops harvested from previously fallowed acres. Oats county estimates are estimated by practice of irrigated and non-irrigated only. These estimates are available on our website http:// www.nass.usda.gov/mt/ or they can be requested by calling or writing our office

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Weekly Crop-Weather Reports Begin

For immediate release: March 28, 2001
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612

The 2001 growing season is upon us, and with it begins the weekly crop-weather report published by the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Undoubtably, this is one of the most useful reports for producers, agribusinesses, and market analysts. The report provides up-to-date conditions and progress of Montana's crops as well as pertinent data on moisture supplies and weather information.

We will resume publication of the weekly reports April 2, 2001. These will continue through October 29 when the last 2001 weekly report will be issued. At that time, monthly reports will resume.

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Agricultural Prices Received for March

For immediate release: March 29, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

February full month crop prices were mostly higher compared with January 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's spring wheat average price was $3.13 per bushel, up 8 cents from January; while durum wheat was $3.67 per bushel, down 14 cents; and winter wheat was 4 cents lower at $2.98 per bushel. Feed barley average price was $1.78 and malt barley, at $2.83 per bushel, were up 2 and 20 cents, respectively.

The mid-March price for alfalfa hay was $92.00 per ton and other hay, at $84.00 per ton, were both unchanged from the previous month. The mid-March winter wheat price, at $3.05 per bushel and spring wheat, at $3.30, were both higher than February's prices. Both feed barley, at $1.60, and malt barley, at $2.65, were lower than February .

Livestock prices for the full month of February were mostly higher than the previous month. While steer and heifer prices fell $3.70 to $87.30 per cwt , cows were up $4.90 to $43.50 and the average price for calves was unchanged at $107.00 per cwt. Sheep prices jumped $6.00 to $45.00 per cwt, and lamb prices increased $8.30 to $98.00 per cwt. Milk prices decreased $.60 per cwt from last month to $13.70 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-March were slightly higher than February's price, at $87.70 per cwt. and milk prices were lower at $13.10 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for February and changes from January were as follows: winter wheat was $2.74, down 3 cents; spring wheat was $2.99, up 3 cents; the all barley price was $2.07, up 11 cents; and steer and heifer prices were $78.90, down $.40 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-March winter wheat price was $2.86 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.99 per bushel, all wheat was $2.89 per bushel, and all barley was $2.16. Steer and heifer prices were $81.10 per cwt, cow prices were $43.20, all hog prices were $45.10 per cwt, and all egg prices were 69.1 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary All Farms Products Index of Prices Received in March was 104 based on 1990-92=100, up 4 points (4.0 percent) from the February Index. Higher prices for hogs, broilers, milk, and cattle were partially offset by lower prices for apples, lettuce, strawberries, and corn. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of strawberries, asparagus, milk, and broilers were partially offset by lower marketings of cattle, cotton, oranges, and corn.

Compared with March 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 8 points (8.3 percent) higher. Price increases from March 2000 for milk, cattle, broilers, and strawberries were partially offset by lower prices for soybeans, corn, apples, grapefruit, and potatoes.

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Montana Intends to Seed Less Wheat; Nationally Seedings are Down

For immediate release: March 30, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana **spring wheat** producers expect to seed 3.25 million acres in 2001, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. If these expectations hold, spring wheat seedings would be down 3 percent from 2000 and would be the smallest acreage since 1993. **Winter wheat** seedings remained unchanged from the December estimate at 1.20 million acres, down 20 percent from last year due to the dry fall planting conditions. **Durum wheat** acreage, at 470,000 acres, would be down 2 percent from a year ago. Adding the winter wheat seeded last fall to the other spring and durum wheat intended seedings shows 4.92 million acres of **all wheat** would be planted, down 8 percent from 2000. There is a lot of uncertainty regarding this spring's planting of crops due to the current dry conditions, lack of snowfall, and predicted precipitation that the state may receive this growing season. Producers are also concerned about the availability and cost of fertilizers and electricity for irrigation.

Montana **barley** producers intend to plant an estimated 1.2 million acres, down 4 percent from last year. The intended seeded acreage for **oats** is expected to be 150,000 acres, up 20,000 acres from the previous year. Growers intend to harvest 55,000 acres of the 2001 oat crop for grain, 5,000 acres less than a year ago. **Corn** growers intend to plant 55,000 acres, down 5,000 acres from last year. Farmers intend to plant an estimated 60,000 acres of **sugar beets**, down 1 percent from 2000. Sugar beet acreage may change from this intention as changes in ownership of the sugar beet factories has resulted in the contracting for this year's acreage to be behind and not completed at this point. The area planted to **dry beans** is expected to be 50,000 acres, up 23 percent from last year. An estimated 2.5 million acres of **hay** are expected to be harvested, which is 500,000 acres more than last year's drought affected harvest. This increase reflects farmers' intentions to replenish low hay stocks due to increased demand for supplemental feeding. Whether or not producers will be able to harvest all the intended acreage is dependent on weather conditions.

Nationally, growers of **other spring wheat** intend to plant 15.5 million acres this year, up 2 percent from 2000. Of the total, about 14.6 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. The largest acreage increases are expected in Idaho, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Washington. Growers in Montana, Oregon, and South Dakota intend to plant fewer acres than a year ago. **Winter wheat** planted area for the 2001 crop is 41.3 million acres, down 5 percent from 2000. This is the lowest acres seeded to winter wheat since 1971. Of the total, about 29.1 million acres are Hard Red Winter, 8.8 million acres Soft Red Winter, and 3.4 million acres White Winter. Area seeded to **Durum wheat** is expected to total 3.46 million acres, down 12 percent from 2000. Poor growing and harvest conditions during the last several seasons have contributed to the sharp decline in North Dakota.

U.S. **Barley** growers intend to seed 5.32 million acres in 2001, down 9 percent from the 5.84 million acres seeded in 2000. North Dakota, with 1.60 million acres, is down 16 percent from last year and Montana is down 4 percent from a year ago. Of the 27 barley producing States only 5 plan to increase acreage. **Oats** acres seeded and to be seeded by U.S. farmers for the 2001 crop year is expected to total 4.43 million acres, down 52,000 acres from last year's final planted acres. Growers expect to harvest 2.2 million acres for grain, 120,000 acres less than the final 2000 harvested acreage. If intentions are realized, planted and harvested acres would be the lowest on record, breaking the previous record lows set last year. Lower acreage intentions in the Corn Belt, Northeast, and the Carolinas will more than offset acreage increases in the western States. In Nebraska and Texas, acres harvested for grain are expected to rebound from last year's drought reduced levels.

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March 1, 2001 Grain Stocks

For immediate release: March 30, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curtis Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

All wheat stocks in Montana on March 1, 2001 were 98.0 million bushels, down 10 percent from March 1, 2000, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Stocks stored on the farm accounted for 76.0 million bushels of the total with the remaining 22.0 million bushels stored off farm. All spring wheat stocks, at 66.1 million bushels, were down 22 percent from last year and accounted for 67 percent of the total wheat stocks. Winter wheat stocks were estimated at 31.9 million bushels, up 31 percent from last year. Durum wheat stocks were estimated at 7.2 million bushels, down 21 percent from last year. All wheat disappearance for the December 2000 - February 2001 quarter was 35.9 million bushels, compared with 53.1 million for the same quarter last year. Barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2001 were 16.9 million bushels, down 23 percent from a year ago. Oats stocks in all positions were estimated at 1.91 million bushels, down 15 percent from last year.

Nationally, all wheat stored in all positions on March 1, 2001 totaled 1.34 billion bushels, down 5 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 390 million bushels, down 8 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 950 million bushels, are down 4 percent from a year ago. The indicated December 2000 - February 2001 quarter disappearance is 466 million bushels, down slightly from the same period a year earlier.

Durum wheat stocks in all positions on March 1, 2001 totaled 72.9 million bushels, down 10 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 44.2 million bushels, are down 15 percent from March 1, 2000. Off-farm stocks totaled 28.7 million bushels, down 3 percent from a year ago. The indicated December 2000 - February 2001 quarter disappearance of 31.4 million bushels was up 10 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2001 are estimated at 162 million bushels, down nearly 5 percent from March 2000. On-farm stocks are 58.6 million bushels, 1 percent below a year ago. Off-farm stocks are 103 million bushels, 7 percent below March 2000. Indicated disappearance during the December 2000 - February 2001 quarter totaled 66.8 million bushels, up 16 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in all positions on March 1, 2001 totaled 102 million bushels, slightly above the stocks on March 1, 2000. Of the total stocks on hand, 55.8 million bushels were stored in on-farm facilities, 5 percent above this time last year. Off-farm stocks totaled 46.3 million bushels, 4 percent below a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during the December 2000 - February 2001 quarter totaled 42.0 million bushels.

Corn stocks in all positions on March 1, 2001 totaled 6.04 billion bushels, up 8 percent from March 1, 2000 and the highest level since 1987. Of the total stocks, 3.60 billion bushels were stored on farms, up 9 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 2.44 billion bushels, were up 6 percent from the previous year. The December 2000 - February 2001 indicated disappearance is 2.48 billion bushels, compared with 2.44 billion bushels during the same period last year

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2000 Cash Receipts for Meat Animals up in Montana and the U.S.

For immediate release: April 27, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard II or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Cash receipts from the 2000 marketings of cattle, hogs, and sheep in Montana totaled $1.02 billion, up 20 percent from 1999, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Cash receipts from the sales of cattle and calves were up 20 percent in 2000. They increased from $806 million in 1999, to $966 million, which is a historic high for Montana. Increased calf marketings and higher prices contributed to the increase in cash receipts. Marketings of cattle weighing 500 lbs or more, at 1.37 million head, were up slightly from 1999. Marketings of calves weighing less than 500 lbs increased 22 percent from the previous year to 365,000 head. The average price received in 2000 for cattle weighing over 500 lbs rose $10.60 per cwt to $78.20 per cwt. Season average prices for calves weighing less than 500 lbs increased $13.10 per cwt to $103 per cwt.

Cash receipts from the sales of hogs in Montana rose 28 percent from 1999 to $30.5 million dollars. While the marketings of hogs decreased 14 percent from 1999 to 311,000 head, prices for hogs rose dramatically from the previous year as the season average price was up $9.00 to $39.80 per cwt. Sheep and lamb cash receipts rose 17 percent from 1999 to $24.2 million dollars. Marketings of sheep and lambs in 2000 were 53,000 and 285,000 head, respectively. Both sheep and lamb marketings were up from 1999. The average price for lambs rose $7.70 per cwt to $84.50 per cwt and sheep were up $2.30 per cwt from 1999 to $31.40 per cwt.

The United States 2000 gross income from cattle and calves, hogs and pigs, and sheep and lambs totaled $53.4 billion, up 16 percent from 1999. Gross income rose for all three species. Hogs and pigs increased the most, at 36 percent, cattle and calves increased 12 percent, and sheep and lambs increased slightly from the previous year.

In the U.S., total 2000 cash receipts from marketings of meat animals increased 16 percent to $53.0 billion. Cattle and calves accounted for 77 percent of this total, hogs and pigs 22 percent, and sheep and lambs 1 percent. Production increased for cattle and calves, but declined for both hogs and pigs and sheep and lambs. Average prices were up from 1999 levels for all three species.

Nationally, cash receipts from marketings of cattle and calves increased from $36.5 billion in 1999 to $40.8 in 2000, a 12 percent increase. All cattle and calf marketings totaled 57.5 billion pounds in 2000, up 1 percent from last year. The U.S. annual average price per cwt. live weight for cattle was $68.60, an increase of $5.20 from 1999. For calves, the annual average price increased $16.30 to $104.00.

Cash receipts from hogs and pigs totaled $11.8 billion in the U.S. during 2000, up 37 percent from 1999. Marketings decreased to 26.7 billion pounds in 2000, down 1 percent from 1999. The U.S. annual average price per cwt. live weight increased $12.00 to $42.30 in 2000. Nationally, cash receipts from marketings of sheep and lambs in 2000 were $469 million, up slightly percent from 1999. Marketings declined 5 percent to 653 million pounds. The U.S. annual average price per cwt. live weight for sheep increased from $31.10 in 1999 to $34.20 in 2000 while for lambs, the annual average price increased $4.90 to $79.40.

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Agricultural Prices Received for April

For immediate release: April 30, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

March full month crop prices were slightly higher for most crops compared with February 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.06 per bushel, up 8 cents from February; durum wheat was $3.57 per bushel, down 10 cents; and spring wheat was 5 cents higher at $3.18 per bushel. The average price for oats was $1.15 per bushels, up 12 cents from last month. Feed barley average price was $1.80 and malt barley was $2.81 per bushel, up 2 and down 2 cents respectively.

The mid-April price for alfalfa hay was $94.00 per ton, up $2.00 from last month. Other hay, at $86.00 per ton, was also up $2.00 from March's mid-month price. The mid-April winter wheat price averaged $3.00 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.25, feed barley was $1.70, malt barley averaged $2.80 and oats averaged $1.10 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of March were mostly higher than the previous month. Steer and heifer prices increased $.50 to $87.80 per cwt. Cows were up $.30 to $43.80, and the average price for calves was down $1.00 to $106.00 per cwt. Sheep prices increased $.20 to $45.20 per cwt, and lamb prices increased $2.00 to $100.00 per cwt. Milk prices dropped $.80 per cwt from last month to $12.90 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-April averaged $88.00 per cwt., cows averaged $43.50 per cwt., calves averaged $105.00 per cwt., and milk prices were $14.00 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for March and changes from February were as follows: winter wheat was $2.85, up 11 cents; spring wheat was $2.99, unchanged, durum wheat was $2.40; the all barley price was $2.07, unchanged, and steer and heifer prices were $80.50, up $1.60 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-April winter wheat price was $2.79 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.98 per bushel, all wheat was $2.84 per bushel, and all barley was $1.96. Steer and heifer prices were $80.70 per cwt, cow prices were $42.70, all hog prices were $46.70 per cwt, and all egg prices were 66.5 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received in April was 107 based on 1990-92=100, up 4 points (3.9 percent) from the March Index. Higher prices for strawberries, milk, oranges, and hay were partially offset by lower prices for tomatoes, broilers, soybeans, and corn. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of cattle, milk, cucumbers, and broilers were partially offset by lower marketings of soybeans, corn, cotton, and hogs.

Compared with April 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 7 points (7.0 percent) higher. Price increases from April 2000 for milk, strawberries, cattle, and broilers were partially offset by lower prices for lettuce, soybeans, corn, and tomatoes.

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Agricultural Survey Is an Opportunity to Provide the Facts

For immediate release: May 4, 2001
For more information contact: Peggy Stringer or Curt Lund 1-800-835-2612

(Helena, MT) - How many acres will be planted to Wheat? What will spring planting conditions mean for Montana agriculture? To gather reliable, objective information, the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be surveying farmers and ranchers for the June Agricultural Survey.

There is always speculation about each new crop season and agricultural producers are the main source for the facts. "When we speak up and answer questions about the 2001 crop season, we can reduce uncertainty in the agricultural marketplace," says Ralph Peck, Director of the Montana Department of Agricultue.

The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service will be conducting the survey and a representative will contact local producers between May 30 and June 16. This survey is particularly vital because it will provide the first clear indications of the potential production of major commodities in 2001.

The information gathered is widely used. Producers rely on the data to reach valid production, marketing, and investment decisions. Industry analysts, extension agents, and farm organizations use the information in a variety of ways that benefit farmers.

"We safeguard the confidentiality of all survey responses," Peggy Stringer says. "Information from individual operations is combined with other responses to provide the needed data." NASS works with farmers and ranchers to provide meaningful, accurate, and objective statistics that help keep U.S. agriculture informed.

All agricultural statistics published by NASS are available at ***www.usda.gov/nass/.*** For more information, call 1-800-835-2612.

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2000 Montana and United States Cattle Predator Losses

For immediate release: May 4, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1800-835-2612

Montana cattle producers lost 600 head of cattle, weighing 500 lbs or more, and 3,200 head of calves, weighing less than 500 lbs, to all predators during 2000, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The total value of the cattle and calves lost to predators was estimated to be $1.466 million dollars with the value of calves lost at $989,000. Coyotes were the largest single cause of cattle and calf losses with 2,300 head of calves and 200 head of cattle lost during 2000.

The use of non-lethal predator control practices were published in this report. The percentage of Montana cattle producers utilizing the following non-lethal predator practices are:

Practice	Percent
Guard Animals	22.4
Predator Exclusion Fencing	11.9
Herding of animals	14.9
Night Penning of cattle	16.4
Fright Tactics	10.4
Carcass Removal	37.3
Other non-lethal methods	7.5

United States cattle and calf losses from animal predators totaled 147,000 head during 2000. This estimate excludes Alaska. This resulted in a loss to farmers and ranchers of $51.6 million due to predators. Coyotes caused the majority of cattle and calf losses to predators. They accounted for 64.6 percent of the total head lost. Dogs were the second leading cause of predator losses, accounting for 17.7 percent.

Use of non-lethal predator controls is also highlighted in this publication. Farmers and ranchers throughout the United States spent $184.9 million on non-lethal methods to prevent predator loss of cattle and calves.

This report is released as a cooperative effort between the National Agricultural Statistics Service and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Wildlife Services and only includes information on predator losses and control practices.

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May 1 Crop Production and Hay Stocks

For Immediate Release: May 10, 2001
For More Information Contact: Thomas Chard II or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

As of May 1, **Montana winter wheat** producers were expecting a yield of 34 bushels per acre, up 1 bushel from last year, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. If realized, total production of 37.1 million bushels would be down 17 percent from a year ago due to decreased acreage. In the fall of 2000, Montana producers seeded 1.2 million acres of winter wheat, down 300,000 acres from the previous year. Producers expect to harvest 1.09 million acres, 260,000 acres less than what was harvested last year. For the week ending May 7, the condition of the winter wheat crop was rated at 13 percent very poor, 26 percent poor, 38 percent fair, 20 percent good, and 3 percent excellent.

United States winter wheat production is forecast at 1.34 billion bushels, down 14 percent from 2000 to the lowest level since 1978. All classes of winter wheat are down from the previous year. Based on May 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 41.8 bushels per acre, 2.8 bushels less than last year. Grain area totals 32.1 million acres, down 8 percent from last season. The portion of the U.S. winter wheat crop rated good to excellent on April 29, at 41 percent, was 20 percentage points lower than last year. The Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas good to excellent ratings were only 28 percent, 25 percent, and 26 percent, respectively. April 1 conditions were the lowest since 1989, when just 29 percent was rated good and 3 percent was excellent.

Montana hay producers had an estimated 427 thousand tons of hay on hand as of May 1, which is down 58 percent from last year. This is the lowest May 1 hay stocks on hand since 1989, when there were 307 thousand tons of hay on hand, and the seventh lowest stocks since 1945 when records were started . Lower hay production during 2000 and increased feeding of hay due to last years drought conditions contributed to the lower hay stocks. Disappearance from December 2000 to May 1, 2001 totaled 2.74 million tons.

Stocks of all hay in the United States on farms totaled 21.1 million tons on May 1, 2001, down 27 percent from May 1 of the previous year. This reduction reflects a return to near normal stock levels following last year's near record high. Disappearance of hay from December 1, 2000 - May 1, 2001, totaled 82.6 million tons, 3 percent higher than the 1999-2000 crop disappearance of 80.1 million tons. The increased disappearance was due to severe early winter weather in the northern Plains and Midwest, and a late spring across much of the country.

Twenty-seven of the 48 States had lower hay stocks. Most of the States reporting stock declines were located west of the Mississippi River. In these States stock levels were low due to dry conditions during the growing season which caused low production and hay land to be utilized for supplemental pasture. Also, severe winter weather extended the feeding season and increased hay usage.

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2000 Agricultural Chemical Use Estimates for Winter and Spring Wheat and Sugar Beets

For immediate release: May 22, 2001
For more information please contact: Carmen Pennington or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana winter wheat producers applied nitrogen fertilizer to 82 percent of the acreage planted for the 2000 crop, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. A total of 74.2 million pounds of nitrogen fertilizer was applied to the 1.50 million acres of winter wheat planted in Montana . Of the planted area, 77 percent received phosphate fertilizer while potash was used on 43 percent of the acres. Total application of phosphate was 34.0 million pounds and potash was 8.2 million pounds. Winter wheat producers applied 745,000 pounds of herbicides to 91 percent of the planted winter wheat acres in 2000. The most common herbicide used was 2, 4-D with 58 percent of the acreage sprayed. Glyphosate and Dicamba were the next popular herbicides used at 39 and 36 percent respectively, of the planted acreage covered.

Spring wheat producers in Montana planted 3.35 million acres of spring wheat in 2000. Ninety percent of these acres had nitrogen fertilizer applied to them. A total of 167.6 million pounds of nitrogen was applied. Phosphate was applied to 84 percent and potash to 36 percent of the planted spring wheat acreage. Total application of phosphate was 75.5 million pounds and potash was 15.6 million pounds. Producers applied 2.96 million pounds of herbicides to 92 percent of the total spring wheat acres planted in 2000. The most widely used herbicide was 2, 4-D with 63 percent of the acreage sprayed. Glyphosate was the second most common herbicide used on 42 percent. Triasulfuron was used on 39 percent of the planted acres.

Sugar beet producers in Montana applied 8.9 million pounds of nitrogen fertilizer to 100 percent of the 60,700 acres planted in Montana for the 2000 crop. Of the planted area, 99 percent received phosphate fertilizer while potash was used on 66 percent of the acreage. Total application of phosphate was 5.5 million pounds and potash was 1.7 million pounds. The entire planted acreage of sugar beets had some type herbicide used. Desmedipham was the most commonly applied. Eighty-nine percent of the acreage had insecticides applied with Terbufos being the most common and 61 percent of the acreage had fungicides applied. The most common fungicide used was Benomyl with 49 percent of the acreage covered.

Nationally, winter wheat producers applied nitrogen fertilizer to 87 percent of the area planted for 2000 harvest in the surveyed States. Phosphate fertilizers were applied to 54 percent of the collective acreage, ranging from just 11 percent in Oregon to Illinois's 82 percent. All surveyed States treated at least a portion of the acreage with herbicides; 2,4-D was again the most prevalent in terms of area and total application.

Nitrogen fertilizer was applied to 95 percent of the spring wheat acreage in states surveyed (MN, MT, ND, SD) and ND durum producers applied 86 percent to their acreage. Phosphate coverage shows 84 percent for other spring and 66 percent for durum. The three most popular herbicides for the durum area covered were 2,4-D, Trifluralin, and Tribenuron-methyl in that order. However, MCPA and Fenoxaprop were second and third behind 2,4-D on other spring wheat fields.

Sugar beet producers applied nitrogen fertilizer to 98 percent of the area planted for 2000 harvest in the surveyed States. Phosphate fertilizers were applied to 92 percent of the collective acreage, and 50 percent of planted area received potash. All surveyed States treated at least a portion of the acreage with herbicides; insecticides and fungicides.

The agricultural chemical use estimates in this report refer to on-farm use of commercial fertilizers and pesticides on the targeted crops for the 2000 crop year. Farm and ranch operators were enumerated late in the growing season or after the farm operator had indicated that planned applications were completed. The data was compiled from the Agricultural Resources Management Study (ARMS) conducted in the Fall of 2000.

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2000 Agricultural Chemical Use Estimates for Sheep and Sheep Facilities

For immediate release: May 25, 2001
For more information please contact: Carmen Pennington or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The agricultural chemical use estimates in this report are based on data compiled from a survey conducted in late December 2000 through January 2001 in 22 selected States by National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). These States account for approximately 87% of the U.S. sheep inventory as published by NASS. Only those States with published sheep inventory for January 1, 2001 were used for this calculation, however State level agricultural chemical use data was not published. All data refer to the on-farm use of chemical active ingredients contained in insecticides which were applied during the 2000 calendar year. Insecticides are defined as chemical products used for the control of insects. Insecticides are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Insecticides are applied to sheep and sheep facilities to control mange, mites, lice, flies, keds, bots, and other external pests.

All Sheep: Agricultural producers applied 14,191 pounds of insecticides to sheep and lambs during 2000 in the 22 surveyed States. Fenvalerate, at 5,444 pounds, was the top active ingredient used on sheep with respect to total quantity used, followed by malathion, at 3,940 pounds, and permethrin, at 1,749 pounds. These three active ingredients accounted for 78 percent of the total pounds of active ingredients applied to sheep and lambs in the surveyed States during 2000. Of the total chemical applications made to sheep in 2000 in the 22 selected States, 46 percent were applied as a pour-on, 25 percent by injection, 11 percent by hand spray, 10 percent by power spray, and 5 percent through oral drench. Insecticide applications made to sheep through mineral or feed block and dust bags each accounted for 1 percent. All other methods accounted for the remaining 1 percent of the chemical applications.

All Sheep Facilities: In the 22 surveyed States, a total of 4,984 pounds of insecticides was applied to sheep and lamb facilities in 2000. Petroleum distillate had the highest quantity used at 3,180 pounds. Malathion had the second highest quantity used at 935 pounds, followed by permethrin at 248 pounds. These three active ingredients accounted for 88 percent of the total pounds of active ingredients applied to sheep facilities in the surveyed States during 2000.

The full report is available at www.usda.gov/nass/pubs/rptscal.htm or for more information call the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service at 1-800-835-2612

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Agricultural Prices Received for April

For immediate release: May 31, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

April full month crop prices were mostly down compared with March 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.00 per bushel, down $0.06 from March, but spring wheat was $0.08 higher at $3.26 per bushel. Durum wheat prices fell $0.70 to $2.87 per bushel as more lower quality durum wheat was marketed during the month than normal. The average price for oats was down $0.22 from last month to $1.03 per bushel. Feed barley prices were unchanged from the previous month at $1.80 while malt barley slipped $0.04 cents to $2.77 per bushel.

The mid-May price for alfalfa hay and other hay were unchanged from the previous month at $94.00 per ton and $86.00 per ton, respectively. The mid-May winter wheat price averaged $3.10 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.45, feed barley was $1.70, malt barley averaged $2.80 and oats averaged $1.00 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of April were mostly lower than the previous month. Steer and heifer prices were down $0.60 to $87.20 per cwt while cows were up $0.80 to $44.60. The average price for calves was down $1.00 to $105.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $5.70 to $39.50 per cwt, and lamb prices fell $12.50 to $87.50 per cwt. Milk prices rose $1.20 per cwt from last month to $14.10 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-May averaged $86.60 per cwt., cows averaged $45.40 per cwt., calves averaged $103.00 per cwt., and milk prices was $14.40 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for April and changes from March were as follows: winter wheat was $2.77, down $0.08, spring wheat was $3.05, up $0.07; durum wheat was $2.52 , up $0.12; the all barley price was $1.93, down $0.14, and steer and heifer prices were $79.60, down $0.90 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-May winter wheat price was $2.94 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.13 per bushel, durum wheat was $2.53 per bushel, all wheat was $2.98 per bushel, and all barley was $1.77. Steer and heifer prices were $76.20 per cwt, cow prices were $43.40, all hog prices were $51.40 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.553 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received in May was 108 based on 1990-92=100, up 2 points (1.9 percent) from the April Index. Higher prices for milk, hogs, tomatoes, and broilers were partially offset by lower prices for strawberries, cattle, eggs, and corn. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of cantaloups, broilers, grapes, and peaches were partially offset by lower marketings of cattle, milk, asparagus, cotton, and hogs. Compared with May 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 8 points (8.0 percent) higher. Price increases from May 2000 for milk, broilers, cantaloups, and cattle were partially offset by lower prices for corn, soybeans, broccoli, and lettuce.

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2000 Pest Management Practices Survey Results

For immediate release: May 31, 2001
For more information please contact: Carmen Pennington or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The Pest Management Practices 2000 Summary is based largely on data compiled from a nationwide farmer survey conducted in February 2001. Results refer to responses from sampled producers concerning specific practices. The producers were first asked how many acres of a specific commodity they grew in 2000, followed by questions regarding the use of specific pest management practices, in a yes/no format. Pests were defined as weeds, insects, and diseases. If the respondent used a specific practice on a crop, it was assumed that the practice was used on all acres of that crop. For example, if a producer had 500 acres of wheat, and used field mapping of previous weed problems to assist in making weed management decisions, it was assumed that all 500 acres were mapped.

The data are published in two tables for each crop: percent of acres receiving the specific pest management practice and percent of farms using the specific pest management practice. These percentages are published at the U.S. and regional levels. For barley, corn, soybeans, wheat, fruits and nuts, vegetables, and all other crops, the percentages refer only to farms and planted acres. For alfalfa hay and other hay, the percentages refer to farms and harvested acres. The complete report is available from our office or in the national release located on the Internet at www.usda.gov/nass/pubs/rptscal.htm.

A review of overall survey results showed widespread increases in the use of pest management practices on field crops, hay, and vegetables nationwide, compared to 1999. The use of pest management practices on fruit and nut farms was relatively unchanged, although significant decreases for several categories were noted.

Reasons for the changes vary by crop type, but in general, farmers in the 2000 crop year responded to unusual national and regional economic and climatological events. Extremely low commodity prices combined with escalating energy and input costs placed many producers in a cost-price squeeze. Excessive moisture in some areas and resulting pest pressures, along with drought and its carryover affects in other areas, likely played significant roles in the adoption of more cost effective pest management practices by farmers. Continued educational efforts on integrated pest management and precision farming practices, and a change in data collection methodology for this survey also may have had effects on overall survey results.

The leading pest management practice for **barley** continued to be rotating crops to control pests. Fifty-eight percent of the farms used this practice on 75 percent of the acres across the United States. Pest management practices used on 40 percent or more of the barley acres include tillage/etc. to manage pests, cleaning implements after fieldwork, rotating crops to control pests, scouting for pests to make decisions, field mapping of weed problems, weather monitoring, and alternating the use of pesticides.

Nationally, the leading pest management practice for **wheat** was rotating crops to control pests, which was used by 58 percent of the wheat farms on 65 percent of the wheat acres. Cleaning implements after fieldwork was the second most widely used practice, with 62 percent of the acres and 49 percent of the farms. Using tillage/etc. to manage pests and scouting for pests were each reported on 50 percent or more of the acres.

Scouting for pests and cleaning implements after fieldwork were the most widely used pest management practices on **alfalfa** acreage, each at 40 percent. Tillage/etc. to manage pests, and rotating crops to control pests were used on 38 and 36 percent of the alfalfa acreage, respectively. Thirty-four percent of the farms with **hay, other than alfalfa**, used tillage/etc. to manage pests. Cleaning implements after fieldwork was used on 26 percent of the farms and scouting for pests was used on 14 percent of the farms.

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2000 Specialty Crops County Estimates

For Immediate Release: June 5, 2001
For More Information Please Contact: John Gibbons, or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service estimates of oilseed and pulse crops by county are now available for the 2000 crop which is the second year of the data series. Funding for these county estimates was provided by the Montana Department of Agriculture.

Carbon was the largest pinto bean producing county in the state for 2000 with 61,600 cwt produced. The second and third leading counties were **Dawson** and **Prairie** with 58,400 cwt and 54,000 cwt produced, respectively. Looking at garbanzo beans, **Roosevelt** county produced the most in 2000 with production of 24,500 cwt. The second leading county was **Dawson** with 20,200 cwt which was followed by **Daniels** county with 20,000 cwt.

For the 2000 lentil crop, **Sheridan** was the number one county with 92,400 cwt produced. The number two county was **Roosevelt** with total production at 21,500 cwt, and the third largest was **Daniels** county with 21,000 cwt. The dry edible pea county estimates shows that **Roosevelt** county was the largest producer in 2000 with 36,800 cwt, followed by **Dawson** county at 26,400 cwt and **Richland** county at 18,600 cwt.

Sheridan was by far the largest producing county of canola in 2000 with 9.0 million pounds. The second leading county was **Daniels** with 6.3 million pounds produced and was followed by **Teton** county with 4.5 million pounds. **Richland** was clearly the number one safflower producing county with 9.1 million pounds produced. The next leading county was **McCone** at 5.6 million pounds, followed by **Roosevelt's** production of 4.6 million pounds.

Sheridan was the leading county for flaxseed production in Montana for 2000 at 99,000 cwt. The next leading county was **Valley** with 44,000 cwt and was closely followed by **Daniels** county at 42,000 cwt. The largest sunflower producing county was not published because of confidentiality, but **Blaine** county production ranked second in the state with 1.1 million pounds. The third leading county was **Fergus** at 0.8 million pounds. The leading mustard seed producing counties were all in the same general area of the Northeastern Montana. The number one county was **Valley** with 3.4 million pounds produced, followed by **Sheridan** at 2.0 million pounds.

All of the previous information as well as planted acres, harvested acres, and yields by county, district, and state estimates are now available from the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. They are available in printed form or can be accessed by visiting our website at www.nass.usda.gov/mt/ . The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service compiles the only annual county estimates for Montana. These county statistics are based on an acreage and production survey conducted during the fall of 2000. Questionnaires were sent to a sample of farmers and ranchers throughout Montana asking for information on the 2000 acreage and production of their crops. Thanks to those who participated!

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June 1, 2001 Crop Production Forecast

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 12, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

As of June 1, Montana winter wheat producers were expecting a yield of 29 bushels per acre, down 4 bushels from last year and 5 bushels below last month. If realized, total production would be 31.6 million bushels, down 29 percent from last year. Harvested acreage remains the same as last month at 1.09 million acres, down 260,000 acres from last year. Results from a major acreage survey currently underway will be released on June 29, 2001 and will provide additional insight concerning the amount of winter wheat abandoned since planting last fall.

The winter wheat condition in the state deteriorated during the last month as high winds and little rainfall were received during May. As of June 3rd, winter wheat condition was rated 77 percent poor to very poor compared with 20 percent last month and 55 percent a year ago. The lack of rain has caused the topsoil moisture rating to drop to 88 percent short to very short compared with 57 percent last month and 50 percent a year ago. Through the end of May, the percentage of normal rainfall received for the growing season across the state is well below normal with the highest percentage of normal, 85 percent, in the Western and Northeast districts. The two largest winter wheat growing districts, North Central and Central, had received 56 percent and 69 percent of normal rainfall, respectively.

The progress of the winter wheat crop is advanced compared to normal. As of the week ending June 3rd, 24 percent of the winter wheat crop had headed compared to the 5-year average of 15 percent and 30 percent a year ago. The rapid advancement is due to the hot, dry weather. While there has been some rainfall since the beginning of the month, it is too early to tell if it will continue through the critical part of the growing season and what impact it will have on yields.

U.S. winter wheat production is forecast at 1.32 billion bushels, down 2 percent from the May 1 forecast and 15 percent below 2000 to the lowest level since 1978. Based on June 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 41.2 bushels per acre, down 0.6 bushels from the last forecast. Area for 2001 grain harvest is forecast at 32.1 million acres, unchanged from May 1, but down 8 percent from 2000. This is the smallest winter wheat area since 1957.

As of June 3, heading had reached 83 percent in the 18 major States. Harvest progress was at 3 percent, ranging from none in most States to 26 percent in Texas. Forecasted head counts from the Objective Yield surveys in the 6 Hard Red Winter States (Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas) are well below last year's final counts. Indicated average head weights are above last year's level.

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Montana Sweet Cherry Production Forecast Up for 2001, U.S. Looks to Set Record High Production

For immediate release: June 22, 2001
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's sweet cherry growers expect to produce 1,700 tons this year, an increase of 55 percent from last year's 1,100 tons, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Growers have had favorable crop conditions, good pollination and more acres reaching bearing age.

U.S. sweet cherry production is forecast at 235,950 tons, up 9 percent from 2000 and 2 percent above 1999. This is the highest sweet cherry forecast on record.

The Washington crop, at a record high 100,000 tons, is unchanged from the previous forecast but 5 percent more than last year. Production in California is forecast at 60,000 tons, the same as the previous forecast but 50 percent more than last year. Weather conditions in both States have been generally favorable with some localized losses due to wind and cold. Washington's larger crop is mostly due to an increase in bearing acres. The sweet cherry crop in Oregon is forecast at 40,000 tons, unchanged from the previous forecast.

Idaho and Utah are forecasting a decline from last year's crops. Production is down 47 and 54 percent, respectively, from 2000. A hard frost in Idaho during April and cold, rainy weather during pollination in Utah are the main reasons for these decreases.

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Agricultural Prices Received for May

For immediate release: June 28, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The May full month crop prices were higher, except for barley, compared with April 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.10 per bushel, up $0.10 from April, spring wheat was $0.07 higher at $3.33 per bushel. Durum wheat prices jumped $0.77 to 3.33 per bushel as less lower quality durum wheat was marketed during the month compared to the previous month. The average price for oats rose $0.54 from last month to $1.57 per bushel due to limited oat volume during the month. Feed barley prices were down $.19 from the previous month to $1.61 and malt barley slipped $0.11 cents to $2.66 per bushel.

The mid-June price for alfalfa hay was up $1.00 per ton from the previous month to $95.00 per ton but other hay was down $4.00 per ton to $82.00 per ton. The mid-June winter wheat price averaged $3.10 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.45, durum wheat was $3.80, feed barley was $1.60, malt barley averaged $2.60 and oats averaged $1.10 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of May were mixed compared to the previous month. Steer and heifer prices were down $0.60 to $86.60 per cwt while cows were up $1.50 to $46.10. The average price for calves was down $2.00 to $103.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $1.00 to $38.50 per cwt, while lamb prices rose $3.00 to $90.50 per cwt. Milk prices rose $.60 per cwt from last month to $14.70 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-June averaged $89.90 per cwt., cows averaged $44.80 per cwt., calves averaged $105.00 per cwt., and milk prices averaged $16.00 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for May and changes from April were as follows: winter wheat was $2.93, up $0.16, spring wheat was $3.15, up $0.10; durum wheat was $2.66 , up $0.14; the all barley price was $2.13, up $0.20, and steer and heifer prices were $77.40, down $2.20 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-June winter wheat price was $2.68 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.12 per bushel, durum wheat was $2.61 per bushel, all wheat was $2.76 per bushel, and all barley was $1.89. Steer and heifer prices were $77.50 per cwt, cow prices were $43.60, all hog prices were $52.10 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.558 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received in June was 107 based on 1990-92=100, down 1 point (0.9 percent) from the May Index. Lower prices for cantaloupes, lettuce, sweet corn, and tomatoes were partially offset by higher prices for milk, strawberries, celery, and broilers. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of wheat, grapes, hay, and peaches were offset by lower marketings of strawberries, tomatoes, oranges, and cattle. Compared with June 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 9 points (9.2 percent) higher. Price increases from June 2000 for milk, broilers, cattle, and wheat were partially offset by lower prices for cantaloupes, corn, soybeans, and eggs.

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June 1, 2001 Grain Stocks

For immediate release: June 29, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Stocks of all wheat in Montana on June 1, 2001 were 51.4 million bushels, down 15 percent from June 1, 2000, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. All wheat stocks stored on the farm accounted for 34.0 million bushels of the total with the remaining 17.4 million bushels stored off farm. All spring wheat stocks, at 34.4 million bushels, were down 21 percent from last year and accounted for 67 percent of the total wheat stocks. Winter wheat stocks were estimated at 17.0 million bushels, down 1 percent from last year. Durum wheat stocks were estimated at 4.4 million bushels, up 3 percent from last year. All wheat disappearance for the March 2001 - May 2001 quarter was 41.6 million bushels, compared with 47.9 million for the same quarter last year. Barley stocks in all positions on June 1, 2001 were 10.3 million bushels, down 16 percent from a year ago. Oats stocks in all positions were estimated at 1.0 million bushels, down 33 percent from last year.

Nationally, all wheat stored in all positions on June 1, 2001 totaled 873 million bushels, down 8 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 197 million bushels, down 13 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 676 million bushels, are down 7 percent from a year ago. The indicated March - May 2001 disappearance is 465 million bushels, down slightly from the same period a year earlier. Durum wheat stocks in all positions on June 1, 2001 totaled 45.2 million bushels, down 9 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 29.1 million bushels, are down 4 percent from June 1, 2000. Off-farm stocks totaled 16.1 million bushels, down 18 percent from a year ago. The indicated March - May 2001 disappearance of 27.6 million bushels is down 12 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. Barley stocks in all positions on June 1, 2001 are estimated at 106 million bushels, down 5 percent from June 2000. On-farm stocks are 28.9 million bushels, 14 percent above a year ago. Off-farm stocks are 77.4 million bushels, 10 percent below June 2000. Indicated disappearance during the March - May 2001 quarter totaled 55.9 million bushels, down 5 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in all positions on June 1, 2001 totaled 72.6 million bushels, 4 percent below the stocks on June 1, 2000. Of the total stocks on hand, 32.1 million bushels are stored on farm, 11 percent less than this time last year. Off-farm stocks totaled 40.6 million bushels, 1 percent above last year. Indicated disappearance during the March - May 2001 quarter totaled 37.3 million bushels, 45 percent more than the same period a year ago.

Corn stocks in all positions on June 1, 2001 totaled 3.92 billion bushels, up 9 percent from June 1, 2000 and the highest level since 1988. Of the total stocks, 2.23 billion bushels are stored on farms, up 10 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 1.69 billion bushels, are up 9 percent from the previous year. The March - May 2001 indicated disappearance is 2.12 billion bushels, compared with 2.02 billion bushels during the same period last year.

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June 1, 2001 Crop Acreage

For immediate release: June 29, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Small Grain Acreage:

All wheat planted acreage in Montana is estimated to be 5.14 million acres, down 4 percent from last year and is the lowest acreage planted since 1991, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. **Spring wheat** producers planted an estimated 3.4 million acres, up 1 percent from last year and up 5 percent from what they intended to plant on March 1, 2001. Producers intend to harvest 3.25 million acres of spring wheat this year, up 5 percent from last year. The lack of moisture and continued dry conditions has caused some spring wheat acres to be already abandoned. The condition of the spring wheat crop for the week ending June 24th was rated 8% very poor, 19% poor, 33% fair, 36% good and 4% excellent. Conditions have improved since June 1 when the state received substantial rains, however conditions are still worse than at this time last year. **Winter wheat** acreage planted remained unchanged from the March 1 estimate at 1.20 million acres which is down 20 percent from last year due to the dry fall planting conditions. Winter wheat producers expect to harvest 950,000 acres, down 140,000 acres from the previous forecast and down 400,000 acres from last year. This would be the smallest acreage of winter wheat harvested since 1937. The lack of rainfall this spring has resulted in a significant amount of acreage being abandoned. While winter wheat conditions have improved since June 1, conditions are significantly worse than a year ago. As of the week ending June 24th , the condition of the winter wheat crop was rated 40% very poor, 30% poor, 20% fair, 9% good, and 1% excellent compared with 11%, 30%, 35%, 19% and 5%, respectively, a year ago. **Durum wheat** acreage, at 540,000 acres, is up 13 percent from a year ago and is the largest durum wheat planted acreage since 1956. Acreage of durum wheat intended to be harvested is estimated to be 530,00 acres, up 13 percent from last year.

Montana **barley** producers planted an estimated 1.1 million acres, down 12 percent from last year and down 8 percent from what was intended to be planted on March 1, 2001. This is the lowest barley acreage planted since 1979. The state's barley growers intend to harvest 850,000 acres for grain this year, 11 percent less than the previous year's harvest. Planted acreage for **oats**, at 130,000 acres, remains unchanged from the previous year and is 13 percent less than intended plantings on March 1, 2001. Growers intend to harvest 65,000 acres of the oat crop for grain, 15,000 acres more than a year ago.

In the U.S., **all wheat** planted area is estimated at 59.6 million acres, down 5 percent from 2000. Harvested area is expected to total 49.3 million acres, down 7 percent from last year. **Winter Wheat** area harvested for grain is now expected to total 31.7 million acres, down 1 percent from the June 1 forecast and 10 percent below the 2000 total. This is the smallest area for grain since 1933. Planted area is slightly below the previous estimate and 5 percent below last year's acreage. The **Durum** planted area for 2001 is estimated at 3.04 million acres, down 23 percent from last year. Area to be harvested for grain is expected to total 2.98 million acres, 17 percent below last year's level. Seeding progress was slower than normal in North Dakota due to cool wet weather. Acreage planted to other **spring wheat** for 2001 is estimated at 15.2 million, virtually unchanged from the 2000 total. Grain area is expected to total 14.7 million acres, up 2 percent from last year. Due largely to low irrigation water supplies and various power buy back programs, Idaho growers planted the smallest crop since 1991. Seeding began about a week late in North Dakota because of cool wet conditions. The crop there was rated 79 percent good to excellent as of June 24. Conditions have been very good in South Dakota.

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Montana's All Wheat Production Down 17 percent from 2000 Smallest Since 1988

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 11, 2001

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612

Montana's **all wheat production** is expected to be 17 percent smaller than last year's drought reduce crop and the smallest crop since 1988, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. As of July 1, producers expect to harvest 111.86 million bushels of all wheat, down from the 135.21 million bushels harvested last year. The area for harvest is expected to be 4.73 million acres, 190,000 less than were harvested in 2000.

The forecasted **winter wheat** yield , at 24.0 bushels per acre, is down 5 bushels per acre from June and 9 bushels per acre below last year as the lack of rain and heat are taking a toll on yields. Production is forecast to be 22.80 million bushels, down a whopping 49 percent from last year and is the smallest crop since 1985. Despite receiving significant rainfall throughout the state the first half of June, the lack of rain earlier in the growing season and since mid-June has significantly reduced yield potential. While yields have been bad throughout the state, the winter wheat crop in the North Central Montana has been hit the hardest. Winter wheat conditions in the state slid more this month as conditions for the week ending July 1st were rated 42% very poor, 38% poor, 15% fair, 4% good and only 1% excellent. For the week ending July 8th, 61 percent of the winter wheat crop had turned color compared with the 5 year average of 41 percent.

The first **spring wheat** production forecast is 74.75 million bushels, down 4 percent from last years drought reduced production and is the smallest crop since 1990. The harvested acres are expected to be 3.25 million, up 5 percent due to more acres being planted this year. However, the expected yield of 23.0 bushels per acre is down 2 bushels per acre from last year. Spring wheat conditions are also poor with the crop being rated for the week ending July 1st, 17% very poor, 19% poor, 29% fair, 31% good, and 4% excellent. Conditions are likely to continue to deteriorate if no significant rains are received and the hot, dry weather continues through the rest of the growing season. **Durum wheat** production is forecast to be 14.31 million bushels, up 9 percent from last year due to a 13 percent increase in harvested acreage. The expected yield of 27.0 bushels per acre would be down 1 bushel from last year.

Barley yields in Montana are expected to average 41.0 bushels per acre in 2001, 1 bushel more than last year. Barley production is forecast to be 34.85 million bushels compared to the 38.00 million produced last year. Growers expect to harvest 850,000 acres, 100,000 less than were harvested in 2000. **Oats** producers expect to harvest 3.315 million bushels of grain, 28 percent more than produced last year. The 2001 area for harvest is expected to be 65,000 acres compared with the 50,000 harvested for grain in 2000. The expected yield of 51.0 bushels is one bushels below last year.

Montana **potato** producers planted 9,600 acres in 2001, a decrease of 1,900 acres from last year. Growers expect to harvest 99 percent of the crop, or 9,500 acres. The first forecast of potato production will be on November 9, 2001. Statewide, planted acreage for **dry edible peas** is estimated to be 25,000 acres, down 3,000 acres from the previous year. Pea growers expect to harvest 24,000 acres, the same area as last year. **Austrian winter peas** growers planted an estimated 6,000 acres, with 5,900 of those expected to be harvested. This is the first year that Austrian winter pea acreage has been estimated. **Lentils** planted in the state are at 15,000 acres, down 7,000 acres from the previous year. Producers expect to harvest 14,000 of those acres, also down 7,000 acres from 2000.

Nationally, winter wheat production is forecast at 1.37 billion bushels. This is up 3 percent from last month but down 13 percent from 2000. The U.S. yield is forecast at 43.2 bushels per acre, up 2.0 bushels from last month. Increased yields from last month's forecast were seen in most of the Hard Red Wheat (HRW) States. Head counts were down slightly from last month's Objective Yield survey in the six HRW States (Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas).

U.S. other Spring wheat production is forecast at 514 million bushels, down 7 percent from 2000. The U.S. yield is forecast at 34.9 bushels per acre, 3.3 bushels lower than last year. The Pacific Northwest (Idaho, Oregon, Washington) production forecast is down 22 percent from a year ago. Durum wheat production is forecast at 94.1 million bushels, down 14 percent from 2000. The U.S. yield is forecast at 31.6 bushels per acre, 0.9 bushels more than last year.

Barley production in the United States for 2001 is forecast at 264 million bushels, down 17 percent from 2000. The first forecast for 2001 indicates producers expect to average 58.4 bushels per acre, a decrease of 2.7 bushels from last year's near record high. Area harvested, at 4.51 million acres, is 13 percent below the 5.20 million acres harvested in 2000, but unchanged from the previous estimate. The combination of lower expected yields and a decrease in harvested acres has reduced forecast production to its lowest level since 1953.

Planted acreage of lentils in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and Washington is estimated at 215,000 acres, down 1 percent from last year but 18 percent higher than 1999. Harvested acreage is estimated at 212,000. Acreage of dry edible peas planted in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington is estimated at 215,500 acres, up 15 percent from last year but 20 percent below 1999. Planted acreage of Austrian winter peas in Idaho, Montana, and Oregon is estimated at 11,500 acres and harvested acreage is estimated at 10,200 acres.

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July 1, 2001 U.S. All Sheep and Lamb Inventory Totals 8.30 Million Head

For immediate release: July 20, 2001
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on July 1, 2001, totaled 8.30 million head, 2 percent below July 1, 2000. Breeding sheep inventory declined to 4.90 million head on July 1, 2001, 3 percent below July 1, 2000. Market sheep and lambs (including newborn lambs), at 3.40 million head, were 2 percent below last July.

Of the July 1, 2001 breeding herd, 4.07 million head were ewes one year old and older, 195,000 head were rams one year old and older, and 640,000 head were replacement lambs (including newborn lambs).

Region 3 (CO, MT, SD, UT, & WY) accounted for 34.8 percent of the total U.S. sheep and lambs. Region 2 (NM & TX) accounted for 21.4 percent, Region 1 (AZ, CA, ID, NV, OR, & WA) for 17.2 percent, Region 4 (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, & OK) for 15.4 percent, and Region 5 (all other states) accounted for 11.2 percent.

The 2001 lamb crop in the United States is expected to total 4.42 million head, down 4 percent from the 2000 lamb crop of 4.62 million head. Lambs born during January through June 2001 totaled 3.94 million head or 89 percent of the yearly total. An additional 480,000 head are expected to be born during the period July through December 2001.

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Montana Wheat & Barley Varieties 2001

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 20, 2001

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

Neeley remained the leading variety of **winter wheat** seeded in Montana for the fourteenth consecutive year with 273,000 acres, down from the almost 289,000 seeded last year. **Rampart** held second place with close to 187,000 acres seeded in 2001. **Tiber** kept the third position in 2001 with just over 132,000 acres, compared with the approximately 169,000 planted last year. **Morgan** replaced Vanguard this year, rounding out the top four with over 118,000 acres, or 9.9 percent of the seeded acreage. These top four varieties accounted for 59.2 percent of the 1.35 million acres of winter wheat seeded in 2001. In 2000, these same four varieties accounted for 52.6 percent of the total winter wheat acreage for the state.

McNeal was the leading **spring wheat** variety seeded for the fourth consecutive year, accounting for 48.6 percent of the total spring wheat acreage, with more than 1.65 million acres seeded. **Ernest** moved into second place this year with 349,000 acres seeded; well above **Amidon** which fell to third place with 255,000 acres, compared with its over 347,000 seeded last year. **Fortuna** grabbed fourth place with over 185,000 acres seeded. The top four varieties represented nearly 72 percent of the spring wheat seeded in 2000, and of the 3.4 million acres seeded in 2001.

Kyle continued to be the leading **durum wheat** variety for the fifth consecutive year. There were just over 236,000 acres seeded in the state, accounting for 43.7 percent of the 480,000 seeded acres. **Mountrail** moved up from fourteenth position to become the second most popular variety of durum wheat. Nearly 50,000 acres were planted or 9.2 percent of the state's durum wheat. **Ben** took third place this year with over 44,000 acres planted or 8.2 percent of the state total. **Utopia** dropped one slot to the fourth place position this year accounting for nearly 41,000 acres. These top four varieties account for 68.7 percent of total acres seeded to durum wheat. This is comparable to the 67.1 percent reported in 2000 for the same four varieties.

Montana farmers planted 1.1 million acres of **barley** in 2001, down 150,000 acres from last year. Close to 54 percent of the barley seeded statewide were of malting and brewing varieties recommended by the American Malting Barley Association. The top variety seeded in Montana was Harrington, maintaining its position for the eighth consecutive year. It was seeded on over 500,000 acres or 45.5 percent of Montana's barley acreage. **B 1202** maintained the second place malting variety position for the sixth consecutive year with 60,000 acres or 5.5 percent of the barley planted. **Moravian 37** moved up to rank third among malting barley varieties with an increase in seeded acreage to nearly 41,000, or 3.7 percent of the seeded acres. **B Merit** rounds out the top four malting varieties in 2001 with over 12,000 acres planted. **Haybet** remained the leading **feed barley** variety with almost 113,000 acres seeded this year, which accounted for 10.2 percent of the total barley acres seeded. **Baronesse** held as the second most popular feed barley. It captured 5.2 percent of the total acreage or close to 58,000 acres. **Gallatin** became the third place choice in feed barley this year with more than 34,000 acres seeded or 3.1 percent. **Westford** took its place as the fourth leading feed-type variety with over 30,000 or 2.8 percent state-wide of the barley acres seeded in 2001. This is compared to the over 15,000 acres planted in 2000.

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Drought Causes Montana's July Cattle Inventory to drop 7 percent, US Down Slightly

For immediate release: July 20, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard II or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's cattle and calf inventory was 3.5 million head on July 1, 2001, dropping 7 percent or 250,000 head from a year ago, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. This is the largest drop in inventory since the 1985 drought that caused the January 1, 1986 inventory to drop 510,000 head. The main reasons for large drop in inventory are lack of hay and shortage of pasture due to the drought that has plagued the state. Many producers have been forced to sell all or parts of their herd or have moved their cattle to other pastures in the state or out of Montana.

The beef cow inventory dropped 4 percent to 1.551 million head compared with 1.612 million head a year ago. Milk cow inventory rose 1,000 head from a year ago to 19,000 head. The 2001 calf crop is expected to be 1,550,000 million head, down 4 percent from last year.

All cattle and calves in the United States as of July 1, 2001, totaled 105.8 million head, slightly below the 106.3 million on July 1, 2000 and 1 percent below the 107.0 million two years ago. All cows and heifers that have calved, at 43.0 million, were slightly below the 43.2 million on July 1, 2000 and 1 percent below the 43.3 million two years ago. Beef cows, at 33.9 million, were down slightly from July 1, 2000 and 1 percent below two years ago. Milk cows, at 9.15 million, were down 1 percent from July 1, 2000 but was unchanged from two years ago.

Other United States class estimates on July 1, 2001, and the changes from July 1 last year and two years ago, respectively, are as follows:

- All heifers 500 pounds and over, 16.4 million, down 1 percent from both years.
- Beef replacement heifers, 4.6 million, down 2 percent and down 4 percent.
- Milk replacement heifers, 3.6 million, down 3 percent from both years.
- Other heifers, 8.2 million, up 1 percent for both years.
- Steers weighing 500 pounds and over, 14.6 million, up 2 percent and up 1 percent.
- Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.1 million, unchanged and down 5 percent.
- Calves under 500 pounds, 29.7 million, down 2 percent and down 3 percent.
- All cattle and calves on feed for slaughter, 13.1 million, up 7 percent and up 14 percent.

The U.S. 2001 calf crop is expected to be 38.4 million, down 1 percent from 2000 and 1999. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 28.2 million, down 1 percent from both years.

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Agricultural Prices Received for June

For immediate release: July 31, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

The June full month crop prices were mixed compared with May 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.08 per bushel, down $0.02 from May and spring wheat was $0.04 lower at $3.29 per bushel. Durum wheat prices rose $0.07 to $3.71 per bushel. The average price for oats rose $0.03 from last month to $1.60 per bushel. Feed barley prices were up $0.18 from the previous month to $1.79 and malt barley prices rose $0.03 cents to $2.69 per bushel.

The mid-July price for alfalfa hay was down $3.00 per ton from the previous month to $92.00 per ton while other hay was unchanged at $82.00 per ton. The mid-July winter wheat price averaged $3.07 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.25, durum wheat was $3.75, feed barley was $1.80, malt barley averaged $2.75 and oats averaged $1.60 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of May were higher compared to the previous month, except for sheep and lambs. Steer and heifer prices were up $3.60 to $90.20 per cwt and cows were up $0.10 to $46.20. The average price for calves was up $2.00 to $105.00 per cwt. Sheep prices decreased $7.90 to $30.60 per cwt, and lamb prices dropped $15.50 to $75.00 per cwt. Milk prices rose $0.70 per cwt from last month to $15.40 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-July averaged $88.20 per cwt., cows averaged $44.70 per cwt., calves averaged $103.00 per cwt., and milk prices averaged $16.00 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for June and changes from May were as follows: winter wheat was $2.68, down $0.25, spring wheat was $3.03, down $0.12; durum wheat was $3.37, up $0.71; the all barley price was $1.98, down $0.15, and steer and heifer prices were $76.80, down $.60 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-July winter wheat price was $2.69 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.98 per bushel, durum wheat was $2.56 per bushel, all wheat was $2.72 per bushel, and all barley was $1.79. Steer and heifer prices were $74.10 per cwt, cow prices were $42.80, all hog prices were $51.40 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.551 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary United States All Farm Products Index of Prices Received in July was 106 based on 1990-92=100, down 1 point (0.9 percent) from the June Index. Lower prices for cattle, grapes, celery, and peaches were partially offset by higher prices for soybeans, corn, cantaloupes, and broilers. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of grapes, wheat, tomatoes, and grain sorghum were more than offset by lower marketings of milk, cantaloupes, strawberries, and potatoes.

Compared with July 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 10 points (10 percent) higher. Price increases from July 2000 for milk, broilers, wheat, cattle, and corn were partially offset by lower prices for lettuce, sweet corn, turkeys, and barley.

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Montana and U.S. Farm Real Estate Values Up

For immediate release: August 2, 2001
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

The average value of farm real estate in Montana on January 1, 2001 was $375 per acre, up $25 from 2000, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The average value of cropland rose $16 to $502 per acre, compared with a year ago. The average value of irrigated cropland was $1,500, $60 more than a year ago, while non-irrigated cropland gained $10.00 per acre to $360 per acre on January 1, 2001. Pasture values increased $25 to $255 per acre. Montana farm real estate values have been steadily increasing over the past five years.

The U.S. farm real estate value, including all land and buildings, averaged $1,130 per acre on January 1, 2001, up 4.6 percent from January 1, 2000. The $50 per acre increase in farm real estate value during 2000 continued the climb that began in 1987. The overall increase was driven by cropland and pasture which rose 3.4 and 4.4 percent, respectively.

Regional increases in values of farm real estate during 2000 ranged from 1.4 to 8.2 percent. The Southeast and Appalachian regions, at $2,100 and $2,150 per acre, showed the largest percentage gains at 8.2 and 8.0 percent, respectively. All regions continued to post record highs with the exceptions of the southern and northern plains. The northeast region with its urban influences had the highest average value of farm real estate at $2,640 per acre. While the mountain region with its extensive pasture and rangeland has the lowest value at $486 per acre.

During the 1990's, the U.S. average farm real estate value increased 65 percent for an average of 6.5 percent a year. The Lake region produced the largest gain, climbing 76.7 percent from $843 in 1990 to $1,490 in 2000. The Southeast produced the largest gain 8.2% from $1,940 to $2,100. The Southern Plains had the smallest gain for 2001 of 1.4% increasing from $631 to $640 per acre.

The average value of cropland in the U.S. rose 3.4 percent to a value of $1,540 per acre. The largest percent increases, at 9.5 and 7.3 percent, were in the Appalachian and lake regions, respectively. Cropland values were highest in the Pacific region at $3,420 per acre and lowest in the Northern Plains at $688 per acre. Cropland values varied widely across states as each state confronts different circumstances. The impact of urban influences in States such as Wisconsin, Kentucky, and North Carolina, resulted in continued above average gains in cropland values. California, Texas, and Washington had a slight decrease in cropland value.

Pasture average value per acre for the U.S. increased 4.4 percent, with most states going up. The mountain and southern plains, accounting for half of the pastureland in the U.S., both showed increases in 2001. Pasture values were highest in the Northeast, at $2,160 per acre, and lowest in the Northern Plains at $244 per acre.

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Montana farms with Internet Access third highest Nationally

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 6, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Peggy Stringer or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana farms and ranches that have Internet access reached 57 percent in 2001, the third highest percentage in the Nation, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's 57 percent with Internet access trails only Idaho with 62 percent and Oregon with 59 percent. The 57 percent in 2001 compares with 38 percent with Internet access in 1999 and 15 percent in 1997. A total of 71 percent of farms and ranches had access to a computer in 2001, fourth highest nationally, compared with 65 percent two years ago and 54 percent in 1997. Sixty-seven percent of all Montana farms and ranches own or lease a computer, up from 52 percent in 1999. Farms and ranches using computers for their agricultural business increased from 36 percent in 1999 to 43 percent in 2001.

Farm computer usage numbers are also published by regions. Montana is included with Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. In 2001, 67 percent of the farms and ranches in this region have access to a computer, 63 percent own or lease a computer; 39 percent are using a computer for their agricultural business; and 54 percent have Internet access. Computer access for crop farms in the region increased 5 percent to 67 percent. The percentage of crop farms having Internet access increased 10 points to 54 percent. The percentage of livestock producers in the region that had access to computers increased to 69 percent, compared with 66 percent two years ago. Fifty-six percent of the livestock producers in the region have Internet access, compared with 37 percent in 1999.

A total of 43 percent of U.S. Farms now have Internet access, compared to 29 percent with Internet access in 1999. Nearly 55 percent of farms have access to a computer in 2001, compared to the 1999 level of 47 percent. Fifty percent of all U.S. farms own or lease a computer, up from 40 percent in 1999. Farms using computers for their farm business increased from 24 percent in 1999 to 29 percent in 2001.

In 2001, 73 percent of U.S. farms with sales of $100,000 and more have access to a computer, 69 percent own or lease a computer, 55 percent are using a computer for their farm business, and 58 percent have Internet access. For farms with sales between $10,000 and $99,999 the figures are: 53 percent have access to a computer, 47 percent own or lease a computer, 30 percent are using a computer for their farm business, and 39 percent have Internet access. For Farms with sales less than $10,000, 50 percent report having computer access, 45 percent own or lease a computer, 20 percent use a computer for their farm business, and 40 percent have Internet access.

In 2001, operators with access to the Internet were asked four additional questions on their specific uses of the Internet access. The additional Internet questions referred to the purchase of agricultural inputs, conducting agricultural marketing activities, accessing National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reports, and accessing other USDA reports and research information. Of the U.S. farms with Internet access, 6 percent use the Internet to purchase agricultural inputs, to conduct agricultural marketing activities and to access NASS reports while 9 percent access other USDA reports and research information.

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Montana's All Wheat Production Down 20 Percent From 2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 10, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

Based on August 1 conditions, Montana's **all wheat production** is expected to be down 20 percent from last year's drought reduced crop, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. If realized, producers expect to harvest 108.06 million bushels of all wheat, down from the 135.21 million bushels harvested last year.

The forecasted **winter wheat** yield, at 20.0 bushels per acre, dropped 4 more bushels per acre since July and is now down 13 bushels per acre from last year as the dry planting conditions, lack of rainfall early in the growing season, and insect problems have severely affected yields. The rainfall received during June and July came too late to help most of the winter wheat crop. Production is forecast to be 19.0 million bushels, down 57 percent from last year, and the smallest crop since 1940. While yields have been hurt severely throughout the state, the winter wheat crop in the North Central portion of the state has been hit the hardest. The production in the North Central district is expected to be 6.5 million bushels, down 73 percent from last year's 24.1 million bushels. For the week ending August 5th, 63 percent of the winter wheat crop has been harvested compared with the 5 year average of 51 percent.

Spring wheat production is forecasted to be 74.75 million bushels, down 4 percent from last years drought reduced production and the smallest crop since 1990. The expected yield of 23.0 bushels per acre is unchanged from last month, but down 2 bushels per acre from last year. The lack of rainfall early in the growing season hurt fields planted early, but the rainfall during June and July benefitted the spring wheat crop particularly in Central and Eastern Montana. Spring wheat conditions are still poor as the crop was rated for the week ending August 5th, 27 percent very poor, 13 percent poor, 18 percent fair, 34 percent good, and 8 percent excellent. Spring wheat crop progress is ahead of normal as 87 percent of the crop has turned, 37 percent is ripe and 9 percent has been harvested. **Durum wheat** production is forecast to be 14.31 million bushels, unchanged from last month, but up 9 percent from last year. The expected yield of 27.0 bushels per acre is unchanged from last month, but is down 1 bushel from last year. Yield reductions in the North Central portion of the state have been offset by improved yields in the rest of the state due to the June and July rainfall.

Barley yields are expected to average 41.0 bushels per acre in 2001, 1 bushel more than last year's average in Montana. Barley production is forecast to be 34.85 million bushels compared with 38.00 million bushels produced last year. Growers expect to harvest 850,000 acres, 100,000 fewer than harvested in 2000. **Oat** producers expect to harvest 3.32 million bushels of grain, 28 percent more than produced last year. The 2001 area for harvest is expected to be 65,000 acres compared with 50,000 harvested for grain in 2000. The expected yield of 51.0 bushels is 1 bushel below last year's average.

Sugar beet production is forecasted to be 1.238 million tons, down 6 percent from last year. The expected yield, at 21.6 tons per acre is down from the 23.9 tons per acre last year as yields are expected to be lower in the Northeastern portion of the state. Producers are expecting to harvest 57,300 acres, up 2,100 acres from last year. **Dry edible bean** growers expect to harvest 29,000 of the 30,000 planted acres this year. Harvested acreage is estimated to be down 5,800 acres from 2000. Yield is estimated at 1,370 cwt., 30 cwt. per acre less than the previous year. All dry bean production is expected to be 397,000 cwt., or 18 percent less than last year's figure. By class, 15,000 acres of **pintos**, 14,500 acres of **garbanzos,** and 500 acres of **other** beans were planted in 2001. Those numbers were 14,500, 25,300 and 700, respectively in 2000.

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Montana's Spring Wheat Yield Unchanged from last month, Durum and Barley Down

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

Based on September 1 conditions, **spring wheat** production is forecast to be 74.75 million bushels, down 4 percent from last year's drought-reduced production and the smallest crop since 1990, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The expected yield of 23.0 bushels per acre is unchanged from last month, but down 2 bushels per acre from last year. The lack of rainfall early in the growing season significantly impacted yields in the Central portion of the state while the rainfall during June and July benefitted the spring wheat crop particularly in Eastern Montana. Hot, dry conditions during August resulted in rapid harvest progress with 89 percent of the spring wheat acreage harvested by the week ending September 9th.

Durum wheat production is forecast to be 13.25 million bushels, down 7 percent from last month, but up 1 percent from last year due to more acres harvested. The expected yield of 25.0 bushels per acre is down 2 bushels from last month and down 3 bushels from last year. Yields in the North Central portion of the state have been significantly impacted by the lack of rainfall while yield prospects in the Northeast were not as good as producers had originally thought.

As of September 1, 2001, **barley** yields are expected to average 40.0 bushels per acre in 2001, down 1 bushel from the previous month's forecast. This revised estimate is now equal to last year's average for Montana. Consequently, barley production is now forecast to be 34.0 million bushels, compared with the 38.0 million bushels produced last year. Growers expect to harvest 850,000 acres, which is 100,000 fewer than harvested in 2000. For the week ending September 9th, the barley crop acreage was 90 percent harvested.

Sugarbeet production is expected to be 1.235 million tons, down 6 percent from last year. Yields are expected to average 21.7 tons per acre down 2.2 tons from last year. Sugarbeet harvesting has not begun yet, however, early harvesting of sugarbeets was expected to begin September 17th for Holly Sugar in the Sidney area.

Nationally, **Corn** production is forecast at 9.24 billion bushels, down less than one percent from last month and 7 percent from 2000. Based on conditions as of September 1, yields are expected to average 133.5 bushels per acre, down 0.4 bushel from August. If realized, this would be the lowest yield and production since 1997. Forecast yields are down in the northwest Corn Belt due to early-August hot, dry weather during critical reproductive and grain-filling stages.

Other spring wheat production is forecast at 520 million bushels nationally, up 2 percent from last month, but down 6 percent from last season. The final forecast of U.S. average yield is 35.3 bushels per acre. This is 0.8 bushels per acre higher than a month ago. Acreage for harvest is unchanged from last month. Hard Red Spring production is up 3 percent from August at 480 million bushels, while White Spring production is down 3 percent from last month.

Durum wheat production for the U.S. is forecast at 86.5 million bushels, down 6 percent from last month and 21 percent less than 2000. The U.S. yield is now forecast at 29.1 bushels per acre, down 1.8 bushels from August. Acreage for harvest is unchanged from last month.

U.S. **barley** production for 2001 is forecast at 262 million bushels, 2 percent lower than the August forecast and 18 percent below the 2000 production. If realized, this will be the lowest production since 1953. Based on September 1 conditions, producers expect to average 57.9 bushels per acre, down 0.9 bushel from last month and 3.2 bushels below last year's yield. Area harvested, at 4.51 million acres, is unchanged from August but down 13 percent from the previous year. September yields are down for Minnesota, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. The largest yield decreases are in the barley-producing areas of the Pacific Northwest where drought conditions prevailed. Yields in the remaining barley producing States are unchanged from last month except in South Dakota where grower expectations are up 2 bushels.

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Maltsters and Brewers Purchased 13.1 Million Bushels of the 2000 Barley Crop

For immediate release: September 25, 2001
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Maltsters and brewers purchased 13.1 million bushels of Montana's 2000 barley crop to make malt, down 33 percent from 1999, according to a recent survey conducted by the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. The survey was requested and funded by the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee. The average protein of the 2000 malting crop was 12.4 percent, which is 0.2 percent less than the average protein obtained from the 1999 crop.

Montana growers planted 1.25 million acres of barley in 2000, down 50,000 acres from 1999. Of the total, over 823,000 acres were planted to malting type varieties. If the yield of malting varieties equaled the state average yield per planted acre for all barley, then approximately 25.0 million bushels of malting type would have been produced. Since only 13.1 million bushels were used for malt, the remaining 11.9 did not make the malting grade or exceeded demand for malting barley. The barley utilized for malt represented approximately 34 percent of the 2000 total barley crop compared with 34 percent in 1999 and 31 percent in 1998.

Anheuser Busch varieties were the most frequently purchased by maltsters and brewers and represented 42.4 percent of the total purchases. Harrington varieties were the second most commonly purchased. Seventy-one percent of all malt barley purchased was grown in North Central Montana. South Central Montana growers produced over 19 percent of the total.

VARIETY	CROP YEAR 1/	DISTRICTS					STATE	
		N. Central 2/	Central	Southwest	S. Central	Southeast 3/	Bushels	Protein
ANHEUSER-BUSCH VARIETIES	1998	2,887,000	933,000		410,000		4,230,000	12.5
	1999	5,345,000	645,000		500,000		6,490,000	12.6
	2000	4,615,000	390,000		530,000		5,535,000	12.2
GALENA	1998	620,000			305,000		925,000	11.0
	1999	680,000					680,000	11.4
	2000	108,000					108,000	12.6
HARRINGTON	1998	8,095,000	2,429,000	540,000	285,000		11,349,000	12.8
	1999	8,434,000	1,020,000	173,000	500,000		10,127,000	12.9
	2000	4,272,800	325,700	237,600	366,000	28,600	5,230,700	12.8
MORAVIAN 22	1998				675,000		675,000	11.1
	1999	112,400			1,425,000		1,537,400	11.3
	2000				1,625,000		1,625,000	11.6
MORAVIAN 37	1998							
	1999							
	2000	120,000					120,000	12.6
MOREX	1998	230,000		400,000			630,000	13.2
	1999	196,000	295,700				491,700	12.7
	2000	80,700		337,400			418,100	12.6
OTHER	1998	37,500		46,000	20,000		103,500	12.6
	1999	48,100	15,700				63,800	12.1
	2000	16,200					16,200	13.2
TOTAL	1998	11,869,500	3,362,000	986,000	1,695,000		17,912,500	12.6
	1999	14,815,500	1,976,400	173,000	2,425,000		19,389,900	12.6
	2000	9,212,700	715,700	575,000	2,521,000	28,600	13,053,000	12.4

1/ Crop year defined as July 1 to June 30 2/ Includes Northwest 3/ Includes Northeast

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2000 Potato Production and Disposition

For immediate release: September 25, 2001
For more information please contact: John Gibbons or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's 2000 potato production totaled 3.503 thousand cwt., 5 percent above last year and 10 percent above 1998's production. Producers harvested 11,300 acres, 400 more than a year ago and 700 acres more than two years ago. Potato yields averaged 310 cwt. per acre compared with 305 cwt in 1999.

Value of production from the 2000 crop was $20.1 million, down 31 percent from 1999. The average price was $5.75 per cwt, down $3.05 from the previous year's crop. Sales of Montana's 2000 potato crop totaled $15.2 million, which is 42 percent less than last year's crop. Producers sold 2.6 million cwt from the 2000 crop compared with 3.0 million cwt a year ago.

Total 2000 **U.S.** potato production is estimated at 514 million cwt, up 7 percent from 1999, and 3 percent above the previous record high in 1996. Harvested area, at 1.35 million acres, gained 1 percent from 1999. The average yield of 381 cwt per acre was a record high, up 22 cwt from 1999. By season, winter production jumped 22 percent, and for comparable States, summer gained 5 percent, and fall was up 8 percent, while spring production fell 13 percent.

Summer potato production was revised to 19.2 million cwt for 2000, up 5 percent from 1999 for comparable States. Harvested area, at 63,200 acres, was down 2 percent from 1999. The average 2000 yield of 304 cwt per acre was a record high for summer potatoes and 11 cwt above the previous year for comparable States.

Fall potatoes were finalized at a record high 468 million cwt for 2000, up 8 percent from a year ago for comparable States. Area harvested in 1999 was estimated at 1.19 million acres, up 2 percent from 1999. The average yield, at 392 cwt per acre, was a record high, up 23 cwt from a year ago. Final production of fall potatoes was 1 percent below the Annual Crop Summary in January but 1 percent above the first forecast made in November 2000.

Value of all potato production in 2000 was estimated at $2.59 billion, down 6 percent from the previous year. The average price, at $5.08 per cwt, fell 69 cents from a year earlier.

Sales from the 2000 potato crop totaled 465 million cwt, up 6 percent from 1999. Sales accounted for 90 percent of 2000 production. Non sales accounted for 49.0 million cwt of 2000 crop potatoes, up 19 percent from last year. Over the past five years, 91 percent of the potatoes grown have been sold. The other 9 percent were either lost (shrinkage and loss) or used on farms where grown (seed, home use, and livestock feed).

Processors used 288 million cwt of raw potatoes from the 2000 crop, up 5 percent from 1999. Table stock sales totaled 139 million cwt, 3 percent above last year. Seed sales of 23.6 million cwt were down 7 percent. Sales for livestock feed, at 10.1 million cwt, was more than triple a year earlier, mainly because of a government diversion program that bought 6.87 million cwt for feed. The feed category claimed 3.14 million cwt in 1999.

Chip potato use totaled 52.4 million cwt, down 1 percent from a year ago. Frozen french fries and other frozen products utilized 174 million cwt of raw potatoes, up 6 percent. Potatoes used for dehydrating totaled 54.9 million cwt, a gain of 8 percent. Canning use, at 5.41 million cwt, declined 5 percent. Starch, flour and other products were made from 1.81 million cwt of potatoes, up 38 percent from last year.

Shrinkage and loss was estimated at 43.7 million cwt, up 23 percent from last year. Livestock feed on potato farms and home use totaled 1.47 million cwt, an increase of 28 percent. Growers kept 3.82 million cwt for seed on their own farms, down 14 percent from a year earlier.

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October Agricultural Labor Survey

For immediate release: September 25, 2001
For more information please contact: Steve Hirsch or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

The Montana Agricultural Statistics Service will be collecting data for the Quarterly Agricultural Labor Survey beginning Monday, October 15 and continue until the end of the month. Estimates of farm employment are used for a variety of purposes by State and Federal governments, educational institutions, farmer organizations, and private sector employers of agricultural labor. The following are some examples of how farm employment estimates are used:

- USDA uses farm worker data to analyze changes in farm policy and to formulate farm productivity indexes. The inclusion of wage rate data in the Parity Index (Index on Prices Paid by Farmers) is required by law.
- Farm worker data are an important component of personal and national income for the agricultural sector of the Gross Domestic Product.
- Federal regulations that determine the minimum wage rates for domestic and foreign agricultural workers in the U.S. also use the Agricultural Labor Survey data as a major input into the calculations.

Information will be collected based on the reference week of Sunday, October 7 through Saturday, October 13. Questions asked will be in regards to the total number of unpaid, paid, and contract or custom workers; the total number of hours worked for each; and the total gross wages given to paid and contract or custom workers. Only 139 operations in Montana will be included in this important survey, so every response is critical.

Montana operations selected to participate in the survey will be notified by letter, and phone interviewers will contact them starting on October 15 to complete this survey. By law, all information supplied during the interview is kept confidential. Regional and national farm labor estimates will be released to the public on November 16.

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Agricultural Prices Received for August

For immediate release: September 27, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

August full month crop prices were mostly lower compared with July 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.06 per bushel, down $0.04 from July, and spring wheat was $0.14 lower at $3.02 per bushel. Durum wheat prices dropped $0.29 to $3.51 per bushel. Producers received $1.28 per bushel for oats. There was not enough movement of oats during July to establish a price. Feed barley prices were up $0.06 from the previous month to $1.70 and malt barley prices rose $0.06 cents to $3.09 per bushel.

The mid-September price for alfalfa hay was up $17.00 per ton from the previous month to $97.00 per ton and other hay was also up $17.00 per ton to $89.00 per ton. The mid-September winter wheat price averaged $2.90 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.00, durum wheat was $3.80, feed barley was $1.80, and malt barley averaged $2.95.

Livestock prices for the full month of August were mostly lower compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices were up $2.00 to $89.50 per cwt and cows were down $0.40 to $45.40. The average price for calves was unchanged at $107.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $0.30 to $36.00 per cwt, while lamb prices continued to plummet as prices dropped another $8.00 to $55.00 per cwt. Milk prices rose $0.90 per cwt from last month to $16.50 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-September averaged $89.30 per cwt., cows averaged $42.50 per cwt., calves averaged $102.00 per cwt., and milk prices averaged $16.90 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for August and changes from July were as follows: winter wheat was $2.71, up $0.10, spring wheat was $2.84, up $0.03; durum wheat was $2.38, down $0.36; the all barley price was $2.42, up $0.42, and steer and heifer prices were $73.60, down $1.40 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-September winter wheat price was $2.77 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.89 per bushel, durum wheat was $2.71 per bushel, all wheat was $2.80 per bushel, and all barley was $2.21. Steer and heifer prices were $73.00 per cwt, cow prices were $41.60, all hog prices were $45.80 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.567 cents per dozen.

The Preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received in September was 106 based on 1990-92=100, down 3 points (2.8 percent) from the August Index. Higher prices for lettuce, milk, broilers, and wheat were partially offset by lower prices for hogs, soybeans, strawberries, and cattle. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Lower seasonal marketings of cattle, broilers, wheat, and milk were partially offset by higher marketings of soybeans, peanuts, corn, and potatoes.

Compared with September 2000, the All Farm Products Index was 9 points (9.3 percent) higher. Price increases from September 2000 for milk, corn, broilers, and cattle were partially offset by lower prices for cotton, apples, tomatoes, and turkeys.

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September, 2001 Grain Stocks

For immediate release: September 28, 2001
For more information contact: John Gibbons or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Stocks of all wheat in Montana on September, 2001 were 129.8 million bushels, down 23 percent from September 1, 2000, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. All wheat stocks were at their lowest level since the 119.2 million bushels were in storage on September 1, 1988. All wheat stocks stored on the farm accounted for 104.0 million bushels and there were 25.8 million bushels stored off farm. All spring wheat stocks, at 94.6 million bushels, were down 17 percent from last year and accounted for 73 percent of the total wheat stocks. Winter wheat stocks were estimated at 35.3 million bushels, down 36 percent from last year and the smallest September 1 stocks since records began in 1971. Durum wheat stocks were estimated at 13.8 million bushels, down 5 percent from last year. All wheat disappearance for the June 2001 - August 2001 quarter was 18.2 million bushels, compared with 26.7 million for the same quarter last year. Barley stocks in all positions on September 1, 2001 were 31.3 million bushels, down 14 percent from a year ago. Oats stocks in all positions were estimated at 2.8 million bushels, down 22 percent from last year.

Nationally, all wheat stored in all positions on September 1, 2001 totaled 2.16 billion bushels, down 8 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 697 million bushels, down 14 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 1.46 billion bushels, are down 6 percent from a year ago. The indicated June - August 2001 disappearance is 678 million bushels, down 18 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Durum wheat stocks in all positions on September 1, 2001 totaled 94.4 million bushels, down 23 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 60.3 million bushels, are down 30 percent from September 1, 2000. Off-farm stocks totaled 34.1 million bushels, down 9 percent from a year ago. The indicated June - August 2001 disappearance of 34.3 million bushels is down 6 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Barley stocks in all positions on September 1, 2001 are estimated at 245 million bushels, down 17 percent from September 2000. On-farm stocks are 135 million bushels, 11 percent below a year ago. Off-farm stocks are 111 million bushels, 22 percent below September 2000. Indicated disappearance during the June - August 2001 quarter totaled 110 million bushels, down 19 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in all positions on September 1, 2001 totaled 116 million bushels, 23 percent below the stocks on September 1, 2000. Of the total stocks on hand, 74.8 million bushels were stored on farms, 26 percent less than a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 40.9 million bushels, 17 percent below a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during June - August 2001 totaled 73.9 million bushels, 2 percent less than the same period a year ago.

Old crop corn stocks in all positions on September 1, 2001 totaled 1.90 billion bushels, up 11 percent from September 1, 2000 and the highest level since September 1993. Of the total stocks, 753 million bushels are stored on farms, down 5 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 1.15 billion bushels, are up 24 percent from the previous year. The June - August 2001 indicated disappearance is 2.03 billion bushels, compared with 1.87 billion bushels during the same period last year.

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September 2001 Small Grain Summary

For immediate release: September 28, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana's 2001 winter wheat production was estimated at 19.14 million bushels, down 57% from last year's crop. This is the smallest winter wheat crop produced in the state since 1940, when just 17.46 million bushels were reaped. Producers seeded 1.3 million acres, but harvested only 870,000 acres, 480,000 acres less than were harvested in 2000. The 2001 average yield was 22.0 bushels per acre, which is 11 bushels lower than last year's average. The final yield was moved up 2 bushels from the August 1 forecast because more acres were abandoned than expected which had the effect of raising the average yield of the acres harvested. Hard red winter represented 99 percent of the acreage for 2000 and 98 percent for 2001 crop years, the balance was white wheat.

Spring wheat production in Montana was estimated at 65.55 million bushels, down 15% from 2000. The 2001 crop was the smallest since 53.9 million bushels were produced in 1990. Final seeded acreage was 3.55 million acres, 200,000 acres more than 2000 and 150,000 more than earlier forecast. Producers harvested 2.85 million acres, down 400, 000 acres from the earlier forecast and 250,000 acres less than last year. Abandonment was much higher than anticipated especially in the north central region. Yields averaged 23.0 bushels per acre, down 2 bushels from 2000 because of the drought conditions that persisted for much of the growing season across the state. Hard red spring represented 99 percent of the acreage for 2000 and 2001 crop years, the balance was white wheat.

Montana **durum wheat** growers seeded 510,000 acres and harvested 495,000 acres in 2001. With the lack of spring precipitation in the Northeastern part of the state where a majority of the durum wheat is grown, producers saw poor yields. The average yield for Montana was 24.0 bushels per acre, 4 bushel less than 2000. Total production was estimated at 11.88 million bushels, down 9 percent from last year. The 2001 production is the fourth highest on record, thanks to the fact that harvested acreage is third only to 978,000 acres harvested in 1956 and 577,000 acres in 1957.

Barley planted acreage in Montana decreased to1.10 million acres, 150,000 acres less than 2000. Producers harvested 720,000 acres, 230,000 acres less than were harvested for grain in 2000. Final yields averaged 41.0 bushels per acre, up 1 bushel from last year, as well as from our previous forecast. Production was estimated at 29.5 million bushels, down 22% from last year. The 2001 production is the smallest crop since 1961 when 26.4 million bushels was realized. The main reasons for the decrease were the prevailing drought conditions during much of the growing season, as well as a propensity for farmers to harvest barley for hay.

Oat production in Montana was estimated at 2.40 million bushels, down 8 percent from last year. Planted acreage was estimated at 130,000 acres, equal with last year. Harvested acreage was set at 60,000 acres, up 10,000 from 2000. Yields averaged 40.0 bushels per acre, 12.0 bushels below last year.

Nationally, the 2001 **winter wheat** production is estimated at 1.36 billion bushels, the lowest level since 1978. This is down 2 percent from the August forecast and 13 percent below the 2000 level. The U.S. yield decreased 0.3 bushel from August to 43.5 bushels per acre. This is 1.2 bushels below last year's final yield. Acreage for grain is estimated at 31.3 million acres, down 1 percent from the last forecast. This is the smallest harvested area since 1933. Planted area is 41.1 million acres, down 1 percent from the last forecast. Hard red winter production totals 769 million bushels, down 9 percent from last year. Soft red winter production is down 15 percent from 2000 and totals 400 million bushels. White winter production, at 193 million bushels, registered the sharpest decline and is down 22 percent from last year. This is due to dramatically lower yields in the Pacific Northwest (Idaho, Oregon, and Washington).

Other spring wheat production in 2001 is estimated at 513 million bushels, down 1 percent from the last forecast and 8 percent below 2000. Harvested area is 14.6 million acres, up 1 percent from last year. The U.S. yield is 35.2 bushels per acre, down 0.1 bushel from the last forecast but 3.2 bushels below last season. All States recorded lower yields than last year, except Colorado and South Dakota. Objective Yield survey data showed plant populations at above average levels in Minnesota and North Dakota, but below average in Montana. Weight per head remained above average in Minnesota and North Dakota.

National, **durum wheat** production for 2001 totaled 83.6 million bushels, down 3 percent from September 1 and 24 percent less than last year. Grain area totals 2.79 million acres, down 6 percent from the last forecast and 22 percent below a year ago. The U.S. yield is estimated at 30.0 bushels per acre, up 0.9 bushel from the last forecast but 0.7 bushel per acre below 2000.

Barley production is estimated at 250 million bushels, down 5 percent from the last forecast and down 22 percent from last year's estimate. This year's production is the lowest since 1953. Average yield per acre, at 58.2 bushels, is down 2.9 bushels from 2000. The area harvested for grain is estimated at 4.29 million acres, 18 percent below a year ago. U.S. **oats** production is estimated at 117 million bushels, 14 percent below the August 1 forecast and 22 percent below last year's 150 million bushels. This is the lowest production on record. The estimated yield is 61.3 bushels per acre, down 0.7 from August 1 and 2.9 bushels below 2000. Area for harvest is estimated at a record low 1.91 million acres, 13 percent below the August 1 estimate and 18 percent below last year.

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October 1, 2001 All Hay Production Forecasted to be up 9 Percent From Last Year

For immediate release: October 12, 2001
For more information contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

Forecasted **alfalfa hay** yield for Montana remains unchanged from the August forecast of 2.20 tons per acre, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. If realized this would be 0.1 ton per acre better than last year. Total production of alfalfa hay is estimated to be 2.64 million tons, up 5 percent from last year. The harvested acreage of 1.2 million acres for alfalfa also remained unchanged from August and last year's final estimate. **Other hay** yield was lowered from August and is now estimated at 1.5 tons per acre, down 0.1 tons per acre from August, but up 0.2 tons per acre from 2000. Other hay production is expected to be 1.28 million tons, down 6 percent from August, but up 23 percent from last year. Many producers are having to harvest their drought-affected grain crops for hay this year. Harvested acreage is unchanged from August at 850,000 acres, and up 50,000 acres from last year. **All hay** production is estimated at 3.92 million tons, up 9 percent from last year.

Montana **sugar beet** production is forecast at 1.24 million tons, unchanged from last month's forecast, but down 6 percent from last year. Forecasted yield, at 21.7 tons per acre, is unchanged from last month, but is down 2.2 tons per acre from last year. Harvested acreage is forecast to be 57,500 acres, but is expected to change due to sugar beet acreage being enrolled in this year's PIK program. Sugar beet harvest is well underway with 48 percent of the beets pulled compared with the 5-year average of 29 percent.

Nationally, **alfalfa hay** production is forecast at 81.6 million tons, up 2 percent from both August and last year. Yields are expected to average 3.44 tons, up 0.06 ton from August, but down 0.04 ton from last year. Harvested area is 23.8 million acres, unchanged from August, but up 3 percent from 2000. The increase in yields over the August forecast is due to late rains in the southern Great Plains States, and the Pacific Northwest, which helped the final cuttings in these areas.

Other hay production for the U.S. is forecast at a record high 80.7 million tons, 3 percent above the August forecast, and 12 percent above last year's production. Yields are expected to average a record high 2.01 tons per acre, up 0.06 ton above both the August forecast and last year. Harvested area is estimated at 40.1 million acres, unchanged from the last forecast, but up 9 percent from 2000. This year's acreage will be the highest since 1958.

In the U.S. **sugar beet** production is forecast at 28.3 million tons, 1 percent above the September 1 forecast, but 13 percent below last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugar beet-producing states expect to harvest 1.33 million acres. This is unchanged from the September estimate, but 3 percent below last year. The yield is forecast at 21.3 tons per acre, 0.2 ton above September, but 2.3 tons below 2000.

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Agricultural Prices Received for September

For immediate release: October 31, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

September full month crop prices were mostly lower compared with August 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $2.96 per bushel, down $0.10 from August, and spring wheat was $0.04 lower at $2.98 per bushel. Durum wheat prices rose $0.05 to $3.56 per bushel. The average price received for oats rose $.016 to $1.44 per bushel for oats. Feed barley prices were up $0.09 from the previous month to $1.73, while malt barley prices dropped $0.11 to $2.92 per bushel.

The mid-October price for alfalfa hay was down $11.00 per ton from the previous month to $86.00 per ton and other hay was down $11.00 per ton to $78.00 per ton. The mid-October winter wheat price averaged $3.00 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.15, durum wheat was $3.70, feed barley was $1.75, and malt barley averaged $3.10.

Livestock prices for the full month of September were mostly lower compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices were down $1.50 to $88.00 per cwt and cows were down $2.70 to $42.70. The average price for calves was dropped $6.00 to $101.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $7.40 to $28.60 per cwt, while lamb prices continued to plummet as prices dropped another $5.40 to $49.60 per cwt. Milk prices dropped $0.30 per cwt from last month to $16.10 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-October averaged $96.30 per cwt., cows averaged $40.70 per cwt., calves averaged $101.00 per cwt., and milk prices averaged $16.40 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for September and changes from August were as follows: winter wheat was $2.81, up $0.10, spring wheat was $2.87, up $0.03; durum wheat was $3.02, up $0.64; the all barley price was $2.24, down $0.18, and steer and heifer prices were $72.10, down $1.50 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-October winter wheat price was $2.81 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.90 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.11 per bushel, all wheat was $2.86 per bushel, malt barley was $2.70 per bushel, feed barley was $1.82 per bushel, and all barley was $2.25. Steer and heifer prices were $70.80 per cwt, cow prices were $38.50, all hog prices were $41.00 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.645 cents per dozen

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in October was 95, based on 1990-92=100, down a record 10 points (9.5 percent) from the September Index. When compared to the historical base of 1910-1914, the index shows a 66 point decline, becoming the largest month-to-month decrease in recorded history. The previous record one-month decline was 57 points, and occurred between the months of August and September, 1973. A significant downturn in prices for lettuce, milk, soybeans, hogs, corn, broilers, and cattle combined with seasonal shifts in marketings set the stage for the monthly downturn in the index. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Overall marketing changes accounted for 6 of the 10 point decrease in the October index (1990- 92=100). When compared with October 2000, however, the All Farm Products Index was still 2 points (2.2 percent) higher. Price increases from October 2000 for milk, broilers, feed grains, fruits, and potatoes more than offset decreases in oilseeds, cotton, vegetables and eggs.

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November 1 Crop Production Forecast

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 9, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612.

Montana **dry edible pea** production is forecast to be 315,000 cwt, up 35 percent from last year, according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Planted acreage for 2001 is estimated at 25,000 acres, down 3,000 acres from last year. Harvested acres is estimated at 17,500 acres compared with 24,000 acres last year. The yield is forecast at 1,800 pounds per acre is up 830 pounds per acre from last year reflecting the increased harvested acreage and better yields in Northeastern Montana. Production of dry edible peas in the United States is estimated to be 3.80 million cwt, up 9 percent from 2000. Acreage harvested, at 193,300 acres, is 8 percent above a year ago. Average yield is expected to be 1,966 pounds per acre, up 11 pounds from last season

Austrian winter pea production in Montana is forecasted to be 18,000 cwt with only 2,500 acres being harvested for peas. Planted acreage for 2001 is estimated to be 9,800 acres. Most of the Austrian winter pea acres planted this year were harvested as forage or hay rather than for peas. The average yield is forecast to be 720 lbs per acre. The production of Austrian Winter Peas for Idaho, Montana, and Oregon in 2001 is estimated at 95,000 cwt. Acreage harvested and to be harvested for peas is forecast at 7,100 acres. Average yield is expected to be 1,338 pounds per acre.

Lentil production in Montana is forecast to be 252,000 cwt for 2001, up 20 percent from last year. Planted acreage at 22,000 acres is unchanged from last year. Harvested acres at 21,000 acres is also unchanged from last year. Average yield is up 200 lbs per acre from 2000 to 1,200 lbs per acre. Nationally, the production of lentils in 2001 is forecast at 2.93 million cwt, down 3 percent from last year but 23 percent above 1999. Acreage for harvest is forecast at 198,000 acres, down 7 percent from the previous year. Average yield is expected to be 1,480 pounds per acre, up 65 pounds from 2000.

Montana **sugar beet** production was forecast at 1.147 million tons on November 1, 2001, down 13 percent from last month's forecast and last year. Forecasted yield, of 21.4 tons per acre is down 2.5 tons per acre from 2000. Harvested acreage is down 3,300 acres from last month to 53,600 acres and is down 1,600 acres from last year. The reduction in harvested acreage and production is primarily due to acres being enrolled and accepted into this years PIK program. Poor growing conditions early in the spring and disease problems also contributed to reduced yields in some growing areas. United States production is forecast at 25.9 million tons, 9 percent below the October 1 forecast and 20 percent below last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugarbeet-producing States harvested 1.25 million acres. This is 6 percent below the October estimate and 9 percent below last year. Acreage reductions from October were due to the PIK program. The yield is forecast at 20.7 tons per acre, 0.6 ton below October and 2.9 tons below 2000.

Fall potato production in Montana is forecast to be 3.040 million cwt, down 13 percent from last year. Harvested acres are estimated at 9,500 acres, down 1,800 acres from last year. The yield is forecast at 320 cwt per acre, up 10 cwt per acre from the previous year. As of November 1, ninety-nine percent of the crop had been harvested which is 5 points ahead of the five-year average. Production of fall potatoes in the United States for 2001 is forecast at 401 million cwt, down 14 percent from last year and the smallest fall crop since 1993. Area harvested, at 1.09 million acres, is down 8 percent from last year. The average yield is forecast at 367 cwt per acre, a drop of 25 cwt from last year. After a record high production last year, the fall potato crop is smaller in 20 of the 22 fall producing States.

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Agricultural Prices Received for October

For immediate release: November 30, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

October full month crop prices were higher compared with September 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.09 per bushel, up $0.13 from September; spring wheat was $0.20 higher at $3.18 per bushel; and durum wheat prices rose $0.22 to $3.78 per bushel. The average price received for oats rose $0.43 to $1.87 per bushel for oats. Feed barley prices were up $0.12 from the previous month to $1.85, while malt barley prices dropped $0.09 to $2.83 per bushel.

The mid-November price for alfalfa hay was up $13.00 per ton from a year ago to $99.00 per ton and other hay was up $6.00 per ton to $87.00 per ton. The mid-November winter wheat price averaged $2.90 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.25, durum wheat was $3.90, oats was $1.75, feed barley was $1.80, and malt barley averaged $2.95.

Livestock prices for the full month of October were mixed compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices were up $6.70 to $91.20 per cwt and cows were down $3.50 to $39.20. The average price for calves was dropped $2.00 to $99.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $2.50 to $26.10 per cwt, while lamb prices rose $2.00 to $51.60 per cwt. Milk prices rose $1.10 per cwt from last month to $17.20 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-November averaged $91.20 per cwt., cows averaged $35.00 per cwt., calves averaged $97.00 per cwt., and milk prices averaged $17.40 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for October and changes from September were as follows: winter wheat was $2.81, unchanged, spring wheat was $2.97, up $0.10; durum wheat was $2.98, down $0.13; the all barley price was $2.30, up $0.06, and steer and heifer prices were $70.20, down $1.90 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-November winter wheat price was $2.90 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.98 per bushel, durum wheat was $2.97 per bushel, all wheat was $2.94 per bushel, malt barley was $2.71 per bushel, feed barley was $1.83 per bushel, and all barley was $2.31. Steer and heifer prices were $ 66.60 per cwt, cow prices were $35.30, all hog prices were $34.90 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.658 cents per dozen

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in November was 93, based on 1990-92=100, down 1 point (1.0 percent) from the October Index. Lower prices for milk, cattle, hogs, broilers, cotton, and apples more than offset higher prices for soybeans, potatoes, eggs, strawberries, and wheat. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell often affects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of milk, cotton, cattle, cottonseed, and broilers more than offset lower marketings of soybeans, peanuts, and potatoes. Compared with November 2000, the current All Farm Products Index was 5 points (5.1 percent) lower. Price decreases from November 2000 for cattle, lettuce, soybeans, eggs, and rice more than offset increases in potatoes, hay, broilers, and wheat.

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2001 Dry Edible Bean Production

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 11, 2001
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: John Gibbons or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

Production for Montana's **dry edible bean** crop was estimated at 409,000 cwt, down16 percent from the 2000 crop according to the Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Planted acreage for 2001 was estimated at 38,500 acres, down 5 percent from last year's estimate. Harvested area for this year is 31,800 acres, 9 percent below 2000. The yield is forecast at 1,290 pounds per acre, 110 pounds less than last year. Three main factors contributing to the large decreases in production were widespread disease, continued drought, and producers grazing acres.

Pinto bean production for Montana is estimated to be 204,000 cwt, which is 38 percent below last year's estimate. Acres planted are estimated at 11,500 acres, down 21 percent from 2000. Harvested acreage, at 10,300, is 25 percent lower than the previous year. The yield is forecast at 1,980 pounds per acre, 420 pounds less than last year. A lack of irrigation water led to fewer acres seeded and lower yields across the state.

The largest increase in production, for the third year in a row, occurred with the **garbanzo bean** crop. Montana's third production forecast was 200,000 cwt for 2001, compared with 150,000 cwt for last year and 133,000 cwt in 1999. Planted acreage was set at 26,500 acres, up 5 percent from last year. Harvested area is estimated at 21,000 acres. The yield is forecast at 950 pounds per acre, up 30 percent from last year's estimate of 730 pounds per acre. Although yields are expected to be higher than last year, fungal blight and haying or grazing of the acres for feed will result in yields lower than in 1999.

U.S. **dry edible bean** production is estimated at 19.6 million cwt for 2001, up 1 percent from the October 1 forecast but 26 percent below a year ago. This is the lowest dry bean production since 1988, when production was 19.3 million cwt. Area for harvest is estimated at 1.25 million acres, 5 percent below the previous estimate and 22 percent below a year ago. The average yield is estimated at 1,568 pounds per acre, down 75 pounds from last year.

Of the 18 dry bean States, 14 expect lower production than a year ago. Production is down 81 percent in Michigan and off 46 percent in New York from a year ago. Minnesota's farmers harvested 34 percent fewer beans than last year, while Wisconsin's output fell 29 percent, and Wyoming's production is cut by 39 percent. Reductions from last year also came in California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington. Dry summer weather and water shortages hurt dry bean growth in the North East, Midwest, parts of the Western Plains, and the West.

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December 1, 2001 Hogs & Pigs Inventory up 10 Percent

For immediate release: December 28, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Peggy Stringer at 1-800-835-2612

The inventory of all hogs and pigs in Montana on December 1, 2001 was 170,000 head, 10 percent above a year ago. Breeding stock was up 6 percent from last December to 19,000 head. Market hog numbers increased to 151,000 head, up 10 percent from last year.

There were 37,500 sows farrowed in Montana during the period of December 2000 to November 2001. This was an increase of 12 percent from a year earlier. The number of pigs saved per litter increased slightly to 9.09 and resulted in an annual pig crop of 341,000 head, a 12 percent increase from last year. There were 550 farms with one or more hogs in Montana in 2001, down from 650 farms last year.

U.S. inventory of all hogs and pigs on December 1, 2001, was 58.8 million head. This was 1 percent below December 2000, and slightly below September 1, 2001. Breeding inventory, at 6.21 million head, was down 1 percent from December 1, 2000, but 1 percent above last quarter. Market hog inventory, at 52.6 million head, was 1 percent below both last year and last quarter.

The September-November 2001 U.S. pig crop, at 25.0 million head, was 1 percent less than 2000, and slightly less than 1999. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 2.85 million head, slightly above last year. The sows farrowed during this quarter represented 46 percent of the breeding herd. The average pigs per litter was 8.78 pigs saved per litter for the September - November 2001 period, compared with 8.85 pigs last year. Pigs saved per litter by size of operation ranged from 7.40 for operations with 1-99 hogs to 8.90 for operations with more than 5,000 hogs and pigs.

U.S. hog producers intend to have 2.84 million sows farrow during the December 2001-February 2002 quarter, 3 percent above the actual farrowings during the same period in 2001, and 2 percent above 2000. Intended farrowings for March-May 2002, at 2.90 million sows, are 1 percent above the same period in 2001, and up 1 percent from 2000.

The number of hog operations with hogs totaled 81,130 during 2001, down 6 percent from last year and 18 percent below 1999. Places with 2,000 or more hogs on hand accounted for 9 percent of the operations and 75 percent of the inventory. This is the sixth time operations with inventories over 2,000 head have controlled over 50 percent of the total inventory. The number of operations with over 5,000 head of inventory at, 2,204, accounted for 52.5 percent of the total inventory, up from 50.5 percent a year ago. The total number of hogs under contract, owned by these over 5,000 head operations, but raised by contractees, accounted for 33 percent of the total U.S. hog inventory, up from 30 percent last year.

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Agricultural Prices Received for November

For immediate release: December 31, 2001
For more information please contact: Thomas Chard or Curt Lund at 1-800-835-2612.

November full month crop prices were generally higher compared with October 2001, according to Montana Agricultural Statistics Service. Montana's winter wheat average price was $3.12 per bushel, up $0.03 from October; spring wheat was $0.03 lower at $3.15 per bushel; and durum wheat prices rose $0.19 to $3.97 per bushel. The average price received for oats rose $0.12 to $1.99 per bushel. Feed barley prices were up $0.10 from the previous month to $1.95, and malt barley prices were up $0.09 to $2.92 per bushel.

The mid-December price for alfalfa hay was down $4.00 per ton from a last month to $95.00 per ton, and all other hay was unchanged at $87.00 per ton. The mid-December winter wheat price averaged $2.95 per bushel, spring wheat was $3.20, durum wheat was $4.00, oats was $1.95, feed barley was $1.95, and malt barley averaged $3.05.

Livestock prices for the full month of November were mostly lower compared with the previous month. Steer and heifer prices were down $5.20 to $89.50 per cwt and cows were down $5.30 to $33.90. The average price for calves was dropped $4.80 to $94.20 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped $0.50 to $25.60 per cwt, while lamb prices rose $0.10 to $51.70 per cwt. Milk prices were down $1.60 per cwt from last month to $15.60 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-December averaged $86.80 per cwt., cows averaged $34.60 per cwt., calves averaged $94.40 per cwt., and milk prices averaged $14.40 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for November and changes from October were as follows: winter wheat was $2.81, unchanged , spring wheat was $2.91, down $0.06; durum wheat was $3.08, up $0.19; the all barley price was $2.31 up $0.01, and steer and heifer prices were $67.80, down $2.40 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-December winter wheat price was $2.84 per bushel, spring wheat was $2.91 per bushel, durum wheat was $3.13 per bushel, all wheat was $2.89 per bushel, malt barley was $2.56 per bushel, feed barley was $1.74 per bushel, and all barley was $2.19. Steer and heifer prices were $ 68.30 per cwt, cow prices were $35.60, calves were $100.00 per cwt., all hog prices were $33.60 per cwt, and all egg prices were $0.590 per dozen

Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in December was 93, based on 1990-92=100, unchanged from the November index. Higher prices for lettuce, corn, broccoli, and strawberries offset lower prices for milk, broilers, turkeys, and eggs. The seasonal changes in the mix of commodities farmers sell also effects the overall index. Higher seasonal marketings of tobacco, wheat, milk, and oranges offset lower marketings of cattle, grapes, soybeans, and corn. Compared with last year the current All Farm Products Index was six points (6.1 percent) lower. Price decreases from December 2000 for cotton (lowest December price since 1973), cattle, eggs, and soybeans more than offset increases in milk, broilers, oranges, and lettuce. Prices Paid Index Unchanged from Last Month and Last Year The December Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates (PPITW) was 122 percent of the 1990-92 average. The index was unchanged from last month and December 2000. Lower prices in December for diesel fuel, nitrogen, hay and forages, complete feeds and gasoline offset higher prices for herbicides, feeder cattle, feeder pigs, feed grains, and trucks in the index.

#end#

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